**Original article:**

**Risk factors of hepatitis B infection: a community based case control study from southern India.**

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**Abstract :**

**Introduction**: The World Health Organization estimates that 2–5% of the general population is chronically infected with hepatitis B virus in Indian subcontinent. There are only a very few community based studies from India which identified risk factors for Hepatitis B Virus infection. The objective of the current study was to determine the preventable risk factors associated with transmission of Hepatitis B Virus infection in a rural developmental block in Kollam District, Kerala.

**Methods**: Acommunity based case-control study was conducted with the cases being those with diagnosed Hepatitis B infection (HbsAg positive) as identified by the routine surveillance system of the district, from April 1st to August 15th, 2012. Controls were age (+/-5years) and sex matched neighbourhood controls. Univariate analysis for factors associated with Hepatitis B infection was done and selected variables were then entered in to a backward conditional logistic regression model.

**Results**: A total of 45 cases and 45 controls were interviewed. In the multivariate analysis, having done a blood investigation from a clinical laboratory in last six months (Adjusted OR 3.82; 95% CI 1.17-12.16) was significantly associated with hepatitis B cases.

**Conclusion**: Having done a blood investigation from a clinical laboratory in last six months was significantly associated with hepatitis B cases in Kollam district, Kerala. A comprehensive strategy to prevent blood borne pathogen transmission ensuring standard infection control practices in clinical laboratories is urgently needed.

**Key words**: hepatitis B, iatrogenic infections, risk factor, transmission