Department of Medicine
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HKU Studies the Prevalence of Viral Hepatitis in Hong Kong –
The First Largest Population Territory-based Study Identifies Areas of Need in Combating Liver Diseases

Press Conference
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Hepatitis B and C Infections are the main causes of liver-related death in the world.

- **1,162,000 deaths due to liver cirrhosis**
  - Hepatitis B
  - Hepatitis C
  - Alcohol use
  - Other

- **788,000 deaths due to liver cancer**
  - Hepatitis B
  - Hepatitis C
  - Alcohol use
  - Other

The WHO Global Health Sector has established the goal of hepatitis elimination as a major public health target by 2030.

**Includes Hepatitis B + C**

**Target:** Between 6 and 10 million infections reduced to fewer than 1 million by 2030.

**Target:** 1.4 million deaths reduced to fewer than 0.5 million by 2030.
Diagnosis and Treatment Coverage

World Health Organization

WHO Global Hepatitis Report 2017;
The First and the Largest Community Screening Study on all 5 common viral hepatitis in Hong Kong

Organizations
1) Division of Gastroenterology & Hepatology, HKUMed
   2) Hong Kong Liver Foundation
   3) School of Public Health, HKUMed

- Study period: **Feb 2015 – Jul 2016**
- Visit different districts every month
  - to give health promotion lectures on viral hepatitis
  - to complete a 2-page questionnaire by participants
  - to **test for hepatitis serology (A, B, C, D, E)** in participants
- Inclusion criteria
  - Han Chinese ethnicity
  - Age 18 – 75
- **Referral letters were given to participants tested positive for HBV or HCV**
Demographics

- Recruited 10,256 subjects over 19 months
- Mean age: Male 50.4±16 years; Female 52.3±14 years
Hepatitis A and Hepatitis E

% of people with antibodies to hepatitis A

- **2001**: 71%
- **2015/2016**: 65.1%

% of people with antibodies to hepatitis E

- **2001**: 18.8%
- **2015/2016**: 33.3%

Infection rate increased with older age
Infection rate increased in low income groups
Hepatitis B

- Overall HBV prevalence 7.8% (8.8% in 2001)
- Male 8.8%; Female 7.3%
- 48% HBV patients did not know their hepatitis B status prior to this study
- In relationship to commencement of universal vaccination:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>HBV Prevalence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;Aged 26, Born after commencement of universal HBV vaccination</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;=Aged 26, Born before universal HBV vaccination</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
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Hepatitis B

• Risk Factor
  – Male > female (1.2 fold)
  – Mother also Hepatitis B (4.8 folds)
  – Other family members also Hepatitis B (3.4 folds)

• Protective factor
  – Vaccination (reduced by 85%)
HCV remains to have low prevalence in Hong Kong

- **0.5%** (n= 48) were tested anti-HCV positive
- **0.3%** (n= 29) were hepatitis C carriers
Risk factors for hepatitis C

- Self reported history of hepatitis
  - RR 5.47

- Family history of hepatitis/HCC
  - RR 7.1

- Previous blood transfusion
  - RR 11.0

- History of intravenous drug use

- History of Dental treatment
  - RR 10.4

- Hemodialysis

- Skin tattoo

**Legend:**
- Anti-HCV Negative
- Anti-HCV Positive
Summary

• Hepatitis B is still a very common disease in Hong Kong
• Support the effectiveness of universal hepatitis B vaccination programme
• Significant change in hepatitis A and E prevalence over the years
• Support the importance of raising public awareness of chronic hepatitis B and screening
What’s next in Hong Kong?

- To achieve the goal of WHO in 2030, tremendous efforts needed to be made
  - Implement population based vaccination programme for hepatitis B and hepatitis A
  - Implement whole population screening for hepatitis B
  - Implement high risk group screening for hepatitis C
  - Layout health care strategy for the Hong Kong population: get diagnosed, get treated and get the risk of liver cancer and cirrhosis down in Hong Kong!

- It’s time to ACT NOW!