

RESEARCH NOTE

HEPATITIS B AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN ATTENDING HEALTH CARE FACILITIES IN RURAL BANGLADESH

Md Shamsuzzaman^{1,2}, P Singhasivanon¹, J Kaewkungwal¹, S Lawpoolsri¹, P Tangkijvanich³, Robert V Gibbons⁴, M Rahman⁵, ASM Alamgir⁵ and MA Mahtab⁶

¹Department of Tropical Hygiene, Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand; ²Directorate General of Health Services, Dhaka; ⁵Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), Dhaka; ⁶Department of Gastroenterology, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, Dhaka, Bangladesh; ³Faculty of Medicine, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok; ⁴Department of Virology, Armed Forces Research Institute of Medical Sciences, Bangkok, Thailand

Abstract. This study assessed hepatitis B prevalence among pregnant women attending health care facilities in rural Bangladesh. Blood samples were collected from 480 participants. HBsAg was positive in 0.4% of subjects, anti-HBc was positive in 21.5% and anti-HBs was positive in 8.5% of subjects. HBsAg was more prevalent among the older age group. Hepatitis B has a low prevalence among pregnant women in rural Bangladesh. Existing hepatitis B vaccination schedule in the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) to vaccinate the children in rural Bangladesh is appropriate.

Keywords: hepatitis B, pregnant women, rural area, Bangladesh

Correspondence: Dr Md Shamsuzzaman,
Department of Tropical Hygiene, Faculty of
Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, 420/6
Ratchawithi Road, Bangkok 10400, Thailand.
Tel: 66 (0) 806 001 953
E-mail: zaman1217@yahoo.com