

TITLE: HEPATITIS B VACCINATION AMONG HEALTH STUDENTS OF AN INSTITUTION IN THE AGRESTE REGION OF PERNAMBUCANO

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ABSTRACT:

Hepatitis B virus (HBV) can be transmitted through percutaneous or mucosal exposure to blood or infected body fluids. Thus, health professionals are at great risk in acquiring this virus due to occupational accidents. This risk may be even greater during professional training, and because of that vaccination against hepatitis B is highly recommended for health professionals, including health students. This study aimed to determine the immunization profile related to the HBV vaccine in health students enrolled in a higher education institution in the Agreste region of Pernambuco. It regards a cross-sectional descriptive study in which Biomedical Sciences and Pharmacy undergraduates enrolled in a higher education institution in Caruaru-PE were evaluated from February to August 2015. Participants completed a questionnaire regarding the vaccination scheme and diagnosis for HBV. Afterward, a blood sample was collected for anti-HBs screening. Reagent samples were quantified by assessing the antibody titer. The entire technical procedure was performed according to the Biokit leaflet. Data were stored and analysed in Excel. The project was evaluated and approved by the Asces-Unita Research Ethics Committee. From the 166 evaluated students, 76.5% had reactive anti-HBs antibodies, and among these, 72.4% presented titers above 100 mIU/mL. The majority were female and ranged from the age of 19 to 25 years old. About 89% of the students claimed to have taken the vaccine, but only 47.4% had taken the three recommended doses. Most of the students were immunized, however, some individuals susceptible to the virus were detected. It was observed that most of the undergraduates did not have a booster dose nor did they undergo prior screening for anti-HBs, corroborating with the literature findings. The study detected a high percentage of undergraduate students who were immunized for HBV, exhibiting titers above 100 mIU/mL. However, individuals susceptible to the virus were observed to have no antibodies or to have antibody levels below 10 mIU/mL. Epidemiological studies regarding HBV are relevant for the investigation of the immunological status of a population in order to insert vaccination strategies for the non-immunized.

Keywords: Hepatitis B, Prevalence, Serology, Immunization, Students.