

**Sero-epidemiology of hepatitis B and C in Colombo district and an estimate of the contribution of these infections in the aetiology of chronic liver disease.**

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The study revealed that the sero-prevalence of anti-HBc and HBsAg in Colombo district is 5.49 percent (95 percent C.I. 4.42-6.55) and 0.46 percent (95 percent C.I. 0.14-0.77) respectively. The prevalence of anti-HBc was seen to increase progressively with age. Lower educational level, history of acupuncture treatment, risky sexual behaviour in self, being infected with a sexually transmitted infection either in self or the partner and history of imprisonment were significantly associated with anti-HBc positivity. HBsAg carrier status was significantly associated with ethnicity, Moors having a higher risk, in spite of the small number of positive individuals. The findings of the study highlight the importance of a national policy to introduce universal screening of blood donors for hepatitis C infection. Strengthening of health education services is recommended as it was found that risky sexual behaviour and acupuncture to be associated with increased risk of contracting hepatitis Band C infections.