

P0774 Elimination of chronic hepatitis B virus infection in children born in Slovenia: excellent efficacy of preventive strategiesNina Kmet Lunacek¹, Mario Poljak², Breda Zakotnik¹, Mojca Maticic*^{1,3}

¹ Clinic for infectious diseases and febrile illnesses, University Medical Center, Ljubljana, Slovenia, ² Institute of Microbiology and Immunology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, ³ University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Medicine, Slovenia

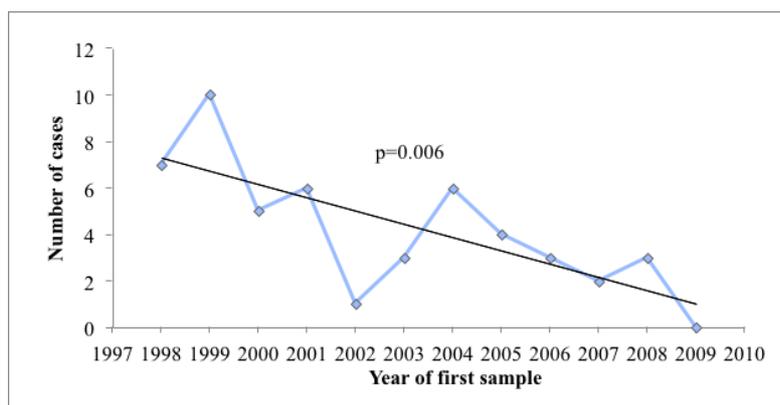
Background: In Slovenia strategies to prevent hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection in children include mandatory testing for HBsAg of pregnant women, introduced in 1994, followed by passive and active immunisation of a newborn in case of a positive result, and mandatory vaccination against hepatitis B of children aged 5-6 years, introduced in 1997. The aim of the present study was to analyse the epidemiological effect of adopted strategies in preventing chronic HBV infection in children born in Slovenia.

Materials/methods: 1,729 HBsAg-positive persons, whose blood samples tested positive at the national referential laboratory in the period between 1997-2010, were analysed retrospectively and those aged between 0-18 years were included in the study. Demographic, epidemiological and virological data were extracted from medical documentation. Additionally, the register of HBsAg-positive children followed up between January 2011 and October 2018 at the national referential centre for paediatric viral hepatitis was checked retrospectively. Statistical evaluation was performed and possible trends during the observational period determined.

Results: Among 1,729 HBsAg positive persons, 52 were children, 47 of them of Slovene origin (90.4%). There were 30 boys (57.7%), mean age (\pm SD) 13.3 (\pm 5.5) years. A significantly negative linear trend ($p=0.006$) was present in the annual number of included children in the period 1998-2009 (Figure 1). The data for years 1997 and 2010 were excluded due to the marked deviation. 41/52 children (78.8%) were born before the year 1994, 39 Slovenians and 2 foreigners. 11/52 (21.2%) children were born after the year 1994, 8 Slovenians and 3 foreigners. There was a significant difference in the proportion of children of Slovene origin born before 1994 and after 1994 ($p=0.039$). The last HBV chronically infected child of Slovene origin was born in 1996. In the period 2011-2018, there have been only five HBsAg-positive children registered in Slovenia, all of foreign parents.

Conclusions: Prevention strategies adopted in the mid-nineties resulted in elimination of HBV chronically infected children of Slovene origin, which is in line with the WHO strategy towards the elimination of viral hepatitis.

Figure: The annual number of HBV chronically infected children in the period 1998-2009.



29TH ECCMID
13-16 APRIL 2019 AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS
POWERED BY M-ANAGE.COM

