Hepatitis C in Intravenous Drug Users: Seroprevalence and Risk Factors


Abstract

Background: Hepatitis C, as a major public health problem, has serious complications and intravenous drug users are the most high risk group for it. This study was performed to determine hepatitis C seroepidemiology and related risk factors among intravenous drug users in Isfahan province.

Methods: In this cross-sectional study, intravenous drug users (IVDUs) in central prison, Assadabad camp and Drop in Centers in Isfahan province were selected using census sampling method. After completion validated questionnaire including demographic and risk factors by interview, a 5 cc blood sample was obtained and HCV-Ab was detected using ELISA method.

Finding: Among 1485 intravenous drug users (1457 male) with mean age of 32 ± 7 years, 644 (43.4%) were HCV-Ab positive. Not being married, tattooing, needle share, prison history, history of going to dentist and duration of intravenous drug abuse were independent risk factors for hepatitis C. Also, men with men sex, sex with intravenous drug users and unprotected sex (without condom) had significant relationship with hepatitis C. Among HCV risk factors, needle share and prison history had highest relative and attributable risks. Using ROC curve, the cut off point for duration of intravenous drug abuse was estimated as three months.

Conclusion: The main results of this study indicated high prevalence rate of hepatitis C and the major role of needle share and prison history among intravenous drug users population in Isfahan province that needs to pay attention by governments.

Keywords: Seroepidemiology, Hepatitis C, Intravenous drug abuse, Iran.