Hepatitis C Has Large Impact in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Sub-Saharan Africa has a high prevalence of hepatitis C virus (HCV), especially among HIV-positive individuals, aidsmap reports. Publishing their findings in The Lancet Infectious Diseases, researchers conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of 213 studies published between 2002 and 2014 that provided hep C and HCV/HIV coinfection prevalence data. The 287 cohorts in the analysis included 1.2 million people in 33 nations.

The overall prevalence rate of hep C was 3 percent, ranging from 1 percent in Southeast Africa to 4 percent in West Africa to 7 percent in Central Africa.

Among those considered to be at low risk for hep C, the overall prevalence was 2.65 percent.

Twelve percent of those considered high risk had hep C, ranging from a 46 percent infection rate among a group of injection drug users in Kenya to a 10 percent rate among people with liver disease.

About 6 percent of HIV-positive people in the studies were coinfected with HCV. This rate ranged from 4.5 percent in Southeast Africa to almost 7 percent in West Africa.

To read the aidsmap article, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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