Large Study Highlights Threat of Hepatitis to Baby Boomers

November 29, 2012

Representing a major step forward in both assessing the health impact of viral hepatitis and acknowledging its significant threat to public health, a large study has underscored that the hepatitis B and C viruses disproportionately affect baby boomers, aidsmap reports. Published in the online edition of Clinical Infectious Diseases, the Chronic Hepatitis Cohort Study (CHeCS) reports that three quarters of hepatitis C virus (HCV) and half of hepatitis B virus (HBV) cases in the United States are among people born between 1945 and 1964.

The study examined electronic health records of the adult, chronically infected HCV and HBV populations between January 2006 and December 2010 in four health care systems in Detroit; Danville, Pennsylvania; Portland, Oregon; and Honolulu. Among the 2,202 hep B patients, 50 percent were between 44 and 63 years old. Among the 8,810 hep C patients, 75 percent were in the same age group. Between 2001 and 2010, 38.3 percent of the hep C patients had a liver biopsy and 44.3 percent were hospitalized. Among the HBV and HCV patients in care, 9 percent of those with hep B and 14 percent of those with hep C died between 2006 and 2010, most of them baby boomers. Researchers noted the “relative youth” of those who died, stressing the significant threat viral hepatitis poses to mortality.

To read the aidsmap story, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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