Hepatitis D: The Hidden Epidemic

March 29, 2017 By Hep Staff

The hepatitis D virus (HDV) causes hepatitis delta, which results in the most severe form of viral hepatitis known to humans. Only those who are already infected with hepatitis B, however, can acquire HDV, as it depends on the hepatitis B virus to survive and reproduce. Hepatitis D co-infections are associated with faster progression to liver fibrosis, early cirrhosis and liver failure, and increased risk of liver cancer than a hepatitis B infection alone.

An estimated 15-20 million people are co-infected with HDV and hepatitis B, and live with a three-fold risk of dying prematurely from liver cancer versus those infected with hepatitis B alone. There is limited published literature on HBV/HDV co-infection, which affects 5 percent of the 240 million people chronically infected with hepatitis B, and very low screening rates globally. Because most HBV/HDV co-infections remain undiagnosed due to a significant lack of awareness and knowledge, there is a great need to address these gaps and identify infected individuals to save lives.

Currently there is no approved treatment for an HDV infection. Pegylated interferon alpha has shown some effectiveness against HDV, but now there are several new drugs in clinical trials that offer hope for the future.

On April 12, 2017 at 3:00 pm EST, please join the free webinar, “Hepatitis Delta Connect: The Hidden Epidemic,” presented by Robert Gish, MD, Medical Director of the Hepatitis B Foundation, who will provide valuable information about hepatitis delta testing, diagnosis, management and treatment.

Register today! https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6456289777711529219

The Hepatitis B Foundation has created the program – Hepatitis Delta Connect – to increase awareness about this co-infection in the hepatitis B community and to provide information to those living with hepatitis B and HDV. This is the first webinar of our new program, which uses innovative outreach strategies through its dedicated website, social media channels and online trainings to improve Hepatitis Delta screening and linkage to care rates, and serves as valuable patient-focused resource for those who

are affected and those providing care.

Learn more about Hepatitis Delta Connect at www.hepb.org/hepDconnect or

www.hepDconnect.org.

About the Hepatitis B Foundation - The Hepatitis B Foundation is the nation’s leading nonprofit organization solely dedicated to finding a cure for hepatitis B and improving the quality of life for those affected worldwide through research, education and patient advocacy. To learn more, visit us at www.hepb.org, read our blog at hepb.org/blog, follow us on Twitter @HepBFoundation, find us on Facebook at facebook.com/hepbfoundation or call 215 -489-4900.

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