

EVALUATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEPATITIS B OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE CITY OF VLORE, ALBANIA- NEED FOR INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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Background: Hepatitis B is a disease that affects the liver, leading to cirrhosis and even hepatocellular carcinoma. Being an infectious disease, anyone is at risk of being affected by it. Especially, young adults who are sexually active, drug users and not well-informed.

Methods and Objectives: The objective of this study was to evaluate the level of knowledge that teenagers have about this disease and also the attitude they have about awareness or preventive measures to be affected by the Hepatitis B virus. The data was collected from high school students of the three largest public high schools in the city of Vlore. The questionnaire consisted of questions related to knowledge about the ways of transmission, the preventive vaccine and the attitude on vaccination.

Results: A total of 543 young people agreed to participate and answered all the questions. Young people lacked information about hepatitis B. 470 students answered that unprotected sexual intercourse is the most common way of transmission. Likewise, 157 students declared that they were not at risk of being affected by hepatitis B and 290 did not believe in the hepatitis B vaccine. Adolescents referred that the main source of information is social media.

Conclusions: In conclusion, young adults lack adequate knowledge about hepatitis B, risk factors and the role of the vaccine. Addressing misconceptions and myths about hepatitis B is crucial. By increasing awareness and understanding, we can enhance prevention efforts and reduce the burden of hepatitis B in adolescents.

Keywords: hepatitis B, knowledge, awareness, preventive measures, vaccine