

P6. Infectious Risks of Healthcare Workers

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Hospitals provide a rich environment for infection. Healthcare personnel often come into contact with infection agents during health care.

Biological hazards are found in all health care areas and are associated with major pathogens such as HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), tuberculosis, intestinal infections and Brucella, Salmonella Other infections are frequently encountered in health workers.

Of the 35 million health professionals in the world, about 3 million are exposed to bloodborne pathogens every year; Of these, 2 million are HBV, 0.9 million are HCV, and 170,000 are HIV. These injuries can cause 15 000 HCV, 70 000 HBV and 500 HIV infections. More than 90% of these infections occur in developing countries. HBV seroprevalence in health workers is 2-4 times higher than general population. Doctors, dentists, laboratories, dialysis workers, cleaning staff and nurses have high prevalence.

In Europe, percutaneous injuries occur with approximately 304,000 HCV, 149,000 HCV, and 22,000 HCV, respectively.

In studies conducted in Turkey, it has been reported that approximately two-thirds of the health professionals contacted blood or body fluids of the accidental patients at least once during their occupational life.

In Turkey, the average incidence of Tuberculosis cases in the community is around 35-40 per hundred. The incidence of tuberculosis among the health care workers in Turkey in Istanbul and Izmir has been reported to be 96 per hundred.

In order to protect health personnel from infections, in-service training should be organized on vaccination, personal protective equipment, exposure to cut-piercing injuries and other occupational risks to be avoided, safe and appropriate ergonomic tools used and effective vaccination programs for health workers.

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