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Unmet Needs of HDV: Addressing Challenges in Diagnosis and Treatment

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Abstract

Hepatitis D virus (HDV) is a defective RNA viroid that requires HBsAg for transmission. HDV infection occurs in individuals positive for HBsAg, leading to severe hepatitis, fibrosis progression, hepatic decompensation, and hepatocellular carcinoma. Treatment success rates remain low, presenting unmet needs. About 13 million individuals are chronically infected with HDV, accounting for 5% of chronic HBV infection cases. Transmission has shifted to immigration and sexual transmission in recent years.

HDV occurs in people with Hepatitis B, causes liver damage, and has no specific treatment. The study aims to identify barriers, potential improvements, and unmet needs in HDV diagnosis and treatment, including better access to treatment options and improved support for patients.

HDV infection continues to pose significant challenges worldwide, particularly in individuals co-infected with HBV. The declining trend in HDV infection due to HBV vaccination is encouraging, but treatment success rates remain suboptimal. Addressing the unmet needs of HDV requires a multifaceted approach encompassing improved diagnostics, targeted therapies, increased awareness, and accessible healthcare services. By focusing on these aspects, we can strive to improve outcomes and reduce the burden of HDV infection on affected individuals and global health systems.

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