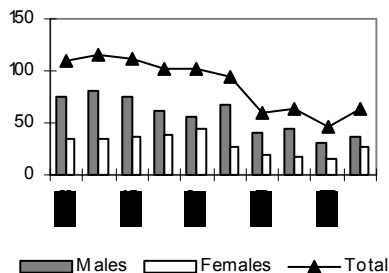


## ACUTE HEPATITIS B 2002

No. 40, 2003

In 2002, the Department of Epidemiology received a total of 63 notifications of patients diagnosed with acute hepatitis B virus infection (HBV). This represents a minor increase relative to 2001, but the same level as in 1999-2000. The cases consisted of 26 (41%) females and 37 (59%) males, [fig. 1](#).

**Fig. 1. Notified patients with acute HBV, by gender, 1993-2002**



The median age was 30 years for males and 25 years for females, and the range was 2-59 years and 2-75 years, respectively. As in recent years, most patients (56%) were in the 20-39-year age group, [table 1](#).

**Table 1. Notified patients with acute HBV, by age and gender, 2002**

Age (years)	M	F	Total
0-9	5	4	9
10-19	1	3	4
20-29	12	11	23
30-39	9	3	12
40-49	6	3	9
50-59	4	1	5
60+	0	1	1
Total	37	26	63

The incidence in Denmark was 1.2 per 10<sup>5</sup> in 2002, however, there was great variation between counties, [table 2](#). A total of 51 (81%) of the notified patients were Danish-born, and 12 (19%) were immigrants. Eight immigrants were from the Middle East, including Turkey. The other four were from Europe, Greenland, South America and Africa, respectively. Four patients were notified with both acute HBV and chronic HCV. All were Danish-born IV drug users (IDU), infected in Denmark.

### Transmission

For 19 (30%) patients, the mode of transmission was unknown. A total of 21 (33%) were infected by heterosexual contact, nine of these through sex with a person with known risk of HBV infection. One of those infected through heterosexual contact was also an IDU. A total of 11 (17%) were infected through IV drug use. There were seven notified cases of nosocomial infection. All were children in-

**Table 2. Notified patients with acute HBV 2002 and incidence per 10<sup>5</sup>, 2001 and 2002, respectively**

County	No.		Incidence	
	2002	2001	2002	2001
Cph. Municip.	12		2.4	1.8
Frb. Municip.	2		2.2	1.1
Copenhagen	4		0.6	1.0
Frederiksborg	4		1.1	1.1
Roskilde	2		0.9	1.7
West Zealand	1		0.3	0.7
Storstrøm	3		1.2	0.0
Bornholm	1		2.3	0.0
Funen	13		2.8	2.8
South Jutland	2		0.8	0.0
Ribe	4		1.8	0.0
Vejle	10		2.8	0.6
Ringkøbing	1		0.4	0.7
Aarhus	4		0.6	0.0
Viborg	0		0.0	0.0
North Jutland	0		0.0	0.2
Unknown	0		-	-
Total	63		1.2	0.9

fectured on the same hospital ward by the same source. All seven children were later notified with chronic hepatitis B.

Two patients were infected through close social contact, two males were infected through homosexual contact (men who have sex with men, MSM), and one person was presumed to have been infected through being tattooed. Of the 51 Danish-born patients, 43 (84%) were infected in Denmark, while six out of 12 (50%) immigrants were infected in Denmark. In four Danish-born patients and three immigrants, country of infection was not stated.

### Comments

The number of notified cases of acute HBV has been declining since the early 1980s, and now shows a tendency to reach a steady state. Both IDUs and MSM constitute a declining proportion of those infected, while those infected through heterosexual contact constitute an increasing proportion among both Danish-born patients and immigrants. There have been only few notified cases of infection abroad. This may reflect limited risk behaviour and/or high vaccination coverage among travellers abroad.

A future Medical Technology Assessment will provide information about advantages and disadvantages of the introduction of hepatitis B vaccination in the Danish child vaccination programme.

(S. Cowan, E. Smith, Department of Epidemiology)

### OPINION POLL

In spring 2003, SSI conducted an opinion poll among 100 general practitioners from all over the country. One of the objectives was to provide information about doctors' satisfaction with EPI-NYT (the Danish version of EPI-NEWS) and the Department of Epidemiology's advisory services.

### EPI-NYT

The results showed that EPI-NYT is still widely read. Ninety-three percent stated that they always read the newsletter, and 5% that they read at least every third issue. Fifty-nine percent were highly satisfied and 32% satisfied with EPI-NYT being published on a weekly basis. Regarding the technical content, 56% were highly satisfied and 37% satisfied. In connection with solving specific problems, a total of 87% found EPI-NYT either very satisfactory (44%) or satisfactory (43%). EPI-NYT has a print run of 8,300 copies per week, and is also available on the Serum Institute's website, [www.ssi.dk](http://www.ssi.dk). Readers have the option to receive the newsletter by e-mail. This facility is currently being used by 1,200 readers. When doctors were asked whether they would be satisfied if EPI-NYT were published exclusively on-line, 23% replied that they would be dissatisfied and 48%, very dissatisfied. Sixty-seven percent replied "don't know" to whether they were satisfied with the presentation of EPI-NYT on the Serum Institute's website, which may indicate that this version is seldomly used by general practitioners.

### Advisory service

The Department of Epidemiology offers advice to healthcare staff by telephone during office working hours. Advice may also be sought by post or e-mail. Forty-three percent assessed the advice provided as very good and 48% as good. Twenty-five percent had not used the facility within the last year, while 46% had used the facility up to three times.

### Comments

The Department of Epidemiology welcomes suggestions for topics to be discussed in EPI-NYT. Suggestions may be sent by e-mail to: [EPI@ssi.dk](mailto:EPI@ssi.dk) or by surface mail. (E. Smith, S. Samuelsson, Department of Epidemiology)

## Patients with laboratory-diagnosed gonorrhoea, by county and gender

2nd quarter of 2003 compared with the corresponding period of 2002

County	2nd quarter 2003			2nd quarter 2002		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Cph. & Frb. Municipalities	23	2	25	36	3	39
Copenhagen County	-	3	3	6	1	7
Frederiksborg	3	-	3	5	-	5
Roskilde	2	2	4	4	-	4
West Zealand	3	-	3	2	-	2
Storstrøm	1	-	1	-	-	-
Bornholm	-	-	-	-	-	-
Funen	3	-	3	1	-	1
South Jutland	1	-	1	2	-	2
Ribe	-	-	-	1	1	2
Vejle	1	-	1	4	2	6
Ringkøbing	1	-	1	-	-	-
Aarhus	8	2	10	5	-	5
Viborg	2	-	2	-	-	-
North Jutland	3	-	3	3	1	4
Total	51	9	60	69	8	77

(Dept. of Respiratory Infections, Meningitis and STIs)