

Global expansion of hepatitis vaccination needed to progress hepatitis B elimination

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Results revealed today at The International Liver Congress 2015 demonstrate current treatment and prevention programmes need to be scaled up in order to make elimination of hepatitis B virus (HBV) possible.

The study conducted by Imperial College Scientists, highlights that if existing interventions, such as infant hepatitis B vaccination and [treatment](#) programmes, were scaled up, the number of new chronic HBV infections could be reduced by 90% and mortality levels could be reduced by 65% by 2030. Globally, this would mean 13 million deaths could be prevented, including 6 million cancer cases.

Although universal infant vaccination programmes have proved successful in decreasing the number of new HBV infections, without further intervention the study estimates that the number of people infected with HBV will remain at the current level for the next 40 to 50 years, resulting in 20 million deaths by 2030.

The results were generated using a mathematical model of the worldwide HBV epidemic, which incorporated data on epidemiology, vaccination coverage, treatment, regional demography and the natural history of the virus. Predictions for incidence of new [chronic infections](#), prevalence and HBV-related mortality were developed for interventions remaining at current levels. The researchers then explored what scaling up of treatment and prevention would be needed to achieve control and elimination of HBV by 2030.

The study highlights the need to increase current levels of interventions, including the expansion of vaccination and treatment programmes, in order to significantly reduce the transmission of HBV and lower mortality.

Provided by European Association for the Study of the Liver

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