

Prevalence of core antibody and other markers in urban based, black school children in Kenya.

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Abstract:

This paper reports a study of 279 sera obtained from children attending five schools in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya which is situated in a non-malarious zone. Their ages ranged from six to 16 years. The surface antigen of hepatitis B virus (HBV) was detected in 13 children (4.7%) including seven boys and six girls. The core and surface antibodies were measured by radioimmunoassay on 125 of the samples to study the pattern of infection in childhood and the interrelationships of different parameters of the infection. The core antibody by itself was observed in four children (3.2%). A total of 31 samples (24.8%) had both core and surface antibodies, 19 (15.2%) had only surface antibody. Thus, 48% of all school children tested had serological evidence of past exposure to the virus. The implications of these findings are discussed.