Introduction

Hepatitis E virus (HEV) emerged as an autochthonous food-borne disease in developed countries, transmitted mainly through consumption of undercooked meat. Pigs and other mammals are considered the reservoir of HEV in regions where it is not endemic among humans.

Study Aim

To determine HEV seroprevalence among blood donors in South West Switzerland.

Methods

I agree to my blood donation or some components being used for medical research.

Results and Characteristics of Study Group

And did you find any sign of past infection with your IgG diagnostic kit?

27 samples tested positive for IgG anti-HEV. That’s a seroprevalence of 4.9%.

Discussion

But what about other developed countries?

In comparison with several other developed countries, seroprevalence in Switzerland remains low. However, comparison between studies remains difficult due to differences in the demographics of the populations studied and the HEV antibody detection assay used.

Conclusions

- HEV seroprevalence in Switzerland is low compared to several other European countries
- HEV diagnostic assays may have different sensitivity/specificity which may hinder comparisons
- HEV prevalence among pork and other potentially infected animal species in Switzerland needs to be assessed
- Today no effective screening of active HEV is performed on blood donor samples

All drawings by Annatina Kaufmann, principal investigator
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