

Abstract

To monitor emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, acute jaundice syndrome with unknown etiology has become one of the surveillance diseases in Taiwan. This reportable syndrome was defined as an acute jaundice occurring within three weeks, being accompanied by a liver function derangement and a severe illness. A severe illness means the patient have at least one of the following conditions: hospitalization, circulatory failure, failure of vital organ function, consciousness disturbance and death.

This surveillance project was put forth under the guidance of the Center of Disease Control, Department of Health, Taiwan. Initial laboratory efforts will be directed at identifying infections caused by some known agents that may result in acute jaundice syndrome, including leptospirosis, hepatitis E, hepatitis G, and TT virus.

A total of 56 cases were reported. There were 2 with leptospirosis, 2 infected by hepatitis E virus, 5 (9%) infected by hepatitis G virus, 13 (23%) infected by TT virus. The presence of hepatitis G virus and TT virus infection may only reflect the presence of transfusion-transmitted virus infection. Further research of unknown hepatitis virus infection is warranted. In addition, the role of drugs in inducing acute jaundice with unknown etiology should be clarified in the future in this surveillance system.

Key Word : Jaundice 、 Hepatitis 、 Surveillance 、 Leptospirosis