

## **Prevalence of chronic liver disease among young/middle-aged adults in Northern Italy: role of hepatitis B and hepatitis C virus infection by age, sex, ethnicity**

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### **BACKGROUND**

Sparse population-based data are available on the prevalence and etiology of chronic liver disease (CLD) in Italy. The study aims to assess the role of hepatitis B virus (HBV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection in CLD according to age, gender and ethnicity.

### **METHODS**

Clinically diagnosed CLD in the general population aged 20-59 years in the Veneto Region (North-Eastern Italy) were identified through the Adjusted Clinical Groups System, by record linkage of the archive of subjects enrolled in the Regional Health System with Hospital Discharge Records, Emergency Room visits, Chronic disease registry for copayment exemptions, and the Home care database. Age-standardized prevalence rates (PR) were computed in Italians and immigrants, based on country of citizenship.

### **RESULTS**

Overall 22,934 subjects affected by CLD in 2016 were retrieved, 21% related to HBV and 43% to HCV infection. The prevalence of HCV-related CLD was higher in males, peaking at 50-54 years (males = 11/1000; females = 4/1000). The PR of HBV-related CLD was almost negligible in the Italian population (1/1000), and higher among immigrants, especially from East Asia (males = 17/1000; females = 11/1000) and Sub-Saharan Africa (males = 13/1000; females = 10/1000).

### **CONCLUSION**

Specific population sub-groups identified by age, gender, and ethnicity, were demonstrated to be at increased risk, and these trends are in line with global epidemiological patterns of viral hepatitis.

### **FULL TEXT**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6646875/pdf/main.pdf>