

VIRAL HEPATITIS OPPORTUNISTIC SCREENING IN PATIENTS ADMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL IN SIENA

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Poster

Hepatobiliary

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A prospective screening study in hospitalized patients over 55 years old in Siena, Italy found an active HCV infection prevalence of 0.9% and occult HBV infection prevalence of 8.4% in the gastroenterology cohort, populations not covered by Italy's current free screening programs.

KEY POINTS

- Among 207 hospitalized patients born before 1969 screened at Santa Maria alle Scotte Hospital in Siena, 0.9% had active HCV infection (HCV RNA positive) and 3.9% were anti-HCV positive.
- In the gastroenterology subgroup of 96 patients, 9.4% had HBV infection, with 8.4% carrying occult HBV infection (HBsAg-negative).
- The study population had high comorbidity prevalence (88.4%), including cardiovascular diseases (68.1%), cancer (35.3%), liver and hepatobiliary diseases (28%), and diabetes (22.2%), with 15.5% receiving immunomodulating drugs.
- Elevated transaminase levels were present in 30.4% of patients.
- The authors conclude that opportunistic screening in this older hospitalized population can identify undiagnosed viral hepatitis cases not captured by Italy's current free screening programs targeting those born 1969-1989.

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