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Press Release
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India lagging behind in Hepatitis research: ISCR

This World Hepatitis Day, the Indian Society for Clinical Research (ISCR) notes that India's research in hepatitis is nearly not enough to meet the growing burden of this group of infectious diseases

New Delhi, July 27, 2016: Each year, World Hepatitis Day is observed on July 28 to raise global awareness of viral hepatitis (an inflammation of the liver caused by a virus), and to call for access to treatment, better prevention programs and government action. There are five different hepatitis viruses - Hepatitis A, B, C, D and E. This year, the theme for World Hepatitis Day is 'ELIMINATION' with ambitious targets by WHO member states and a goal to eliminate hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030. One of the five core intervention areas of the global elimination strategy is treatment including new, well-tolerated medicines and treatment regimens for people with chronic hepatitis virus infection. According to the Indian Society for Clinical Research, attainment of this goal requires scaling-up clinical research in hepatitis extensively, particularly in India which carries a high burden of hepatitis B and C.



"Of the five different types of hepatitis, there is no cure for three of the types. Hepatitis C alone affects an estimated 12 million people in India, most of whom do not know that they have the disease. When you take into account the other types, the combined burden of viral hepatitis in India is high. Moreover, all types of hepatitis are contagious and some of them can be potentially life-threatening. Yet, despite the alarming statistics, we as a country have not undertaken enough clinical research in this area. We need treatment regimens that are short and therapies that are effective, affordable and well-tolerated," said Suneela Thatte, President, ISCR.

India has 17 percent of the global population and 20 percent of the global disease burden but less than 1.4 percent of all global clinical trials are done in India. *“India was never a country that had a very high percentage of trials relative to the trials being done in the rest of the world nor is it our objective to be the number one country in the region or globally for doing trials. What is important is that the trials being done in India are significant enough to address our growing burden disease and the unique healthcare requirements of our country. People living with viral hepatitis have a right to safe, affordable and effective care and treatment,”* added Ms. Thatte.

About ISCR

The Indian Society for Clinical Research (ISCR) is an association of clinical research professionals that aims to build awareness of clinical research as a specialty in India and to facilitate its growth in the country while helping to evolve the highest standards of quality and ethics. To that extent, we are fully supportive of the initiatives undertaken by regulatory authorities to create a more robust and regulated environment in India for the conduct of clinical research and will continue to work very closely with different stakeholders in the development of regulations that will safeguard and protect patients in a clinical trial. For more information, visit www.iscr.org

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Hepatitis A

- Spreads through contaminated food or water or through direct contact with an infectious person
- Preventable by vaccine
- There is no cure for Hepatitis A

Hepatitis B

- Spreads by sexual contact, sharing of needles or from pregnant infected mother to her child
- Preventable by vaccine
- Treated with antiviral medications

Hepatitis C

- Spreads by contact with contaminated blood or bodily fluids including saliva or semen of an infected person
- There is no vaccine to prevent hepatitis C
- Treated with antiviral medications but is hard to cure. About 75% to 85% of people who have it develop a long-term infection called chronic hepatitis C. It can lead to conditions like liver cancer and cirrhosis or scarring of the liver.

Hepatitis D

- Occurs only among people who are infected with the Hepatitis B virus
- Transmitted through exposure to the bodily fluids of an infected person, such as their blood or semen
- There is currently no cure or vaccine for hepatitis D. HBV vaccination is therefore recommended to avoid HBV-HDV co-infection

Hepatitis E

- Spreads through contaminated food or water
- A vaccine to prevent hepatitis E virus infection has been developed and is licensed in China, but is not yet available elsewhere
- There is no cure for Hepatitis E

Source: World Health Organization Fact Sheets on [Hepatitis A](#); [Hepatitis B](#); [Hepatitis C](#); [Hepatitis D](#); [Hepatitis E](#)
WebMD – [Hepatitis Health Center](#)