Observations of HAA in a Blood Donor/Recipient System in Thailand

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INTRODUCTION: This is a continuation and progress report on *Observations of HAA in a blood donor recipient system in Thailand* as it appeared in the SEATO Medical Research Laboratory, Annual Progress Report 1971—1972, pp 140—155. The study concerns the development of post—transfusion hepatitis in persons receiving units of blood containing Hepatitis B Antigen (HB—Ag, previously designated HAA). The donated units are identified and when transfused the unit is tested and the recipient categorized as either a recipient of positive or negative blood, the recipients of negative blood acting as a "control" population.

OBJECTIVE: To determine the results of the transfusion of blood containing Hepatitis B Antigen to a population of Thais where the antigen is highly endemic.

PROGRESS: Approximately 1000 more persons have been added to the study. The study population of persons followed more than 6 months has been expanded to over 125, and a similar number of controls have been followed for this period. In a number of cases, patients have now been followed for more than 12—18 months. New patients have not been admitted to the study since November 1972 and the input of patient data is essentially complete. Presently, improved techniques for HB—Ag and HB—Ab are being developed and will be used with the stored sera. Collation of the data is in progress. The data should provide information on the following important areas of consideration:

(1) rate of development of HB—Ag after receiving a unit containing the antigen;

(2) rate of development of clinical and sub—clinical hepatitis following transfusion of a unit containing the antigen;

(3) persistence of developed HB—Ag;

(4) time sequence of the development of HB—Ag and of hepatitis;

(5) time sequence of SGOT rise and SGPT rise and an indication of the relative sensitivity and specificity of these tests for evaluation of liver disease;

(6) the significance of prior possession of antigen or antibody with the subsequent receiving of a unit of blood containing HB—Ag or HB—Ab;

(7) some indication of the relationship between HB—Ag and liver disease;

(8) an indication of the prevalence of HB—Ag and HB—Ab among a population of ill persons requiring transfusion;

(9) blood group differences in HB—Ag acquisition.

SUMMARY: This study has just completed its second year of follow—up. To date, 2840 persons have received transfusions and been followed in the study. Approximately 300 persons have been followed for 6 months or longer. Early data indicate that overt hepatitis following HB—Ag transfusion is a surprisingly rare occurrence in the study population.

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