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AUTOIMMUNITY IN CHRONIC VIRAL HEPATITIS IN CHILDREN - PREVALENCE OF NON-SPECIFIC AUTOANTIBODIES

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Background: Chronic infections with hepatitis viruses are frequent associated with autoimmune manifestations and with autoantibodies as serum marker of autoimmunity.

The aim of our study was to evaluate the prevalence of autoantibodies in patients with chronic viral hepatitis and to correlate the presence of autoantibodies with evolution of hepatitis in children.

Material and methods: We have studied 45 patients with chronic viral hepatitis. We have used indirect immunofluorescence with 1:20 to 1:320 dilution in order to study the presence of antinuclear (ANA), anti smooth muscle (SMA), anti liver-kidney microsomal (LKM-1) and pANCA autoantibodies.

Results: The prevalence of autoantibodies in children with chronic viral hepatitis was 48,89%. The most frequent autoantibodies were ANA (20%), SMA (15,56%) or ANA and SMA (11,11%). We correlated the presence of autoantibodies with the liver histology and we could demonstrate that the autoantibodies were associated with more severe form of chronic hepatitis.

Conclusions: The presence of autoantibodies in patients with chronic hepatitis has a great influence on the evolution of the disease. Before treatment with Interferon we must determine the immune status of the patients.

