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Abstract

Epidemiological Profile of Hepatitis A Outbreaks in the Southeast Region (2020–2023) †

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Hepatitis is a group of inflammatory liver diseases affecting a vital organ responsible for essential metabolic functions. The highly transmissible viral types A, B, and C may progress to severe outcomes, including fulminant hepatitis, cirrhosis, and hepatocellular carcinoma. Hepatitis A is transmitted via the fecal–oral route and strongly associated with poor sanitation [1,2]. This study aimed to analyze the epidemiological profile of hepatitis A outbreaks in southeast Brazil from 2020 to 2023, focusing on case characteristics, age distribution, and public health impact. A descriptive, retrospective study was conducted using consolidated data from the Information System for Notifiable Diseases (SINAN) and scientific literature [1,3,4]. The information was organized and interpreted by the authors, focusing on the 20–34-year-old age group. Incidence, mortality, and case-fatality rates were calculated based on values reported in official records and published studies [1,3,4]. A total of 46 cases were reported in 2020 (7.8%; 0.20/100,000), 55 in 2021 (9.4%; 0.20/100,000), 119 in 2022 (20.2%; 0.30/100,000), and 368 in 2023 (62.6%; 0.90/100,000), predominantly affecting men aged 20–34 years. The highest prevalence occurred in the 25–29 age group (36.7%), followed by 30–34 years (33.4%) and 20–24 years (29.9%). The sharp increase in 2023 suggests gaps in prevention and control [4]. There is a growing trend of hepatitis A cases in southeast Brazil from 2020 to 2023, especially among young adult men. These findings highlight the need to strengthen preventive measures, promote early diagnosis, and implement educational actions to control transmission [1–4].

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