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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
4580	27.03.2018	27.03.2018	Telangana	www.timesofindia.com/English https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/hepatitis-b-c-cases-rise-by-over-60-in-telangana/articleshowprint/63476112.cms
Title:	Hepatitis B, C cases rise by over 60% in Telangana			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to SSU-Telangana			

Hepatitis B and C cases have been on a sharp rise in the state with medical experts pegging it to anywhere between 60-70% over the last two years.

Apart from insufficient haemovigilance (surveillance procedures used to test blood during donation, surgeries etc), experts also cite lack of sterilization, especially during dental procedures and endoscopy, as reasons for this spike in count.

"From four-five cases of Hepatitis B a month two years ago, I now treat about 20 a month. The number of Hepatitis C cases are also increasing phenomenally," said Dr K S Somasekhar Rao, consultant gastroenterologist at a city-based hospital and founder, Save the Liver Foundation. He added: "During procedures like endoscopy and root canal, if instruments are not adequately sterilised, it can lead to the spread of the viruses."

According to a study by the foundation, the Hepatitis B load in Mahbubnagar and Gadwal, for instance, is a staggering 15% as against a normal 3.5% across the country.

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**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

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Elaborating on the issue of haemovigilance, doctors said that while many blood banks do not conduct the HBsAg test (meant to detect Hepatitis B), even those who do fail to detect the virus, at times. "In at least 10% of the cases, the HBsAg test does not pick up the Hepatitis B virus. As for Hepatitis C, a majority of the blood banks do not perform the Nucleic Acid Test (NAT) or the Anti HCV test," added Dr Rao.

Part of the reluctance to carry out these tests, experts say, is because of the additional cost involved in it. "The test can cost anywhere between Rs 500 and Rs 1500 (depending on the facility). It is also largely ignored largely due to the lack of awareness," said Dr Vijay Kumar, founder, Blood Cross Society, adding how the two viruses are more dangerous than HIV.

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