

Introduction & Aim of Work

INTRODUCTION

Hepatitis C virus is an important public health problem in both developing and developed countries. Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver characterized by the presence of inflammatory cell in tissue this condition can be self limited (healing on its own) or can progress to fibrosis (scarring) and cirrhosis, which is a leading cause of end stage liver diseases and hepatocellular carcinoma (**Butt, et al,2010**).

The World Health Organization(WHO),2010, estimates that three percent of the world's population or 170 million people-have been infected with hepatitis C each year, more than 3–4 million become infected . While in Egypt contains the highest prevalence of hepatitis C in the world; the problem continues to get bigger. More than 500,000 new hepatitis C infections occur every year. This leaves HCV as the currently the most significant public health problem in Egypt in addition to HCV one of top five leading causes of death, liver cirrhosis and liver cancer in Egypt (**Egypt Demographic Health survey, 2009**).

It has suggested that the Egyptian HCV epidemic results from the use of unsterile injection equipments during mass treatment of the general population with parenteral antischistosomal therapy (**Ahmed, et al, 2010**). HCV is a single stranded positive RNA genome, which belongs to the flavivirdae family. It has six genotypes (1-6) and large number of subtypes have been identified, determining HCV genotypes is very important because it has predictive value in the response to treatment and determining duration and dose of treatment (**Ascione, 2010**).

Risk factors associated with acquiring HCV infection include transfusion of blood and blood products, transplantation of solids organs

from infected donors, illegal injection drug use, occupational exposure, haemodialysis and rarely sexual transmission (**Bacon, et al, 2010**).

Patients with HCV typically have no symptoms or exhibits only mild signs, only (20-30%) of patient's exhibits symptoms include anorexia, malaise fatigue, abdominal pain, dark urine and jaundice. There is a time lapse of (6-7) weeks between exposure to virus and any symptoms that may results (**Cachafeiro,et al, 2010**). Diagnosis of hepatitis C based on the results of an enzyme immunoassay (EIA) that identifies anti –HCV antibodies of HCV RNA through amplification testes such as polymerase chain reaction (PCR) (**Bani Sadr,et al,2008**).

The primary goal of treatment is to eradicate HCV infection, but therapy can also decrease hepatic inflammation and fibrosis. Slow the disease progression; decrease the risks for cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma even in the absence of cure (**Ccone J, et al,2010**). The current standard of treatment is the combination of weekly subcutaneous pegylated interferon and daily oral ribavirin, duration and dose of treatment differs according to the viral genotype and patient's response (**Cardoso, 2010**).

A careful assessment of patients' knowledge is central to the whole process of providing care. The guidance argued that rigorous and systematic assessment should be the critical first step in supportive care, leading to the acquisition, knowledge play an important role for patients by helping them feel more in control of disease, obtain information from variety of sources. Such assessment should be an ongoing process, with particular attention at key points (**Cachafeiro, et al,2010**).

The nurse plays an important role in assessing patient's knowledge to determine patient's needs related to physical, social, socioeconomic,

psychological and spiritual needs which have an impact on patient's health factors (**Darling, et al, 2010**).

Significance of the study

Hepatitis constitutes a major health problem in the world and it is considered a life threatening, annually approximately 3% of the world's population (roughly 170-200 million people) infected with HCV. Egypt contains the highest prevalence of hepatitis C in the world; about 7 out of every 1,000 Egyptians are infected with HCV, interestingly genotype (4) represents over 90% of cases (**Honolulu and Doha, 2010**).

The problem continues to get bigger. More than 500,000 new HCV infections occur every year makes it one of the greatest health threats facing the world today, hepatitis C is treatable disease so nurses need to be highly skilled in this area to facilitate patient adherence to therapy by assess knowledge needs and documents most common side effects related to management. So the current study will be carried out in an attempt to assess knowledge for patient with chronic hepatitis C receiving interferon therapy.