INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF THE WORK

Chronic hepatitis implies a continuing inflammatory process which can become irreversible. Chronic hepatitis thus has major diagnostic, prognostic and therapeutic implications. Thorough investigation is mandatory to discover the cause of liver damage, assess its severity and plan treatment (Mowat ,1994b).

Autoantibodies have been described that can distinguish autoimmune hepatitis from chronic viral hepatitis. These different autoantibodies can now be used to distinguish types of autoimmune liver disease from each other and from those with chronic viral hepatitis (Czaja and Manns,1995).

Antineutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies (ANCA) are a group of autoantibodies directed to cytoplasmic constituents of neutrophils and monocytes (Gross and Csernok,1995).

IgG autoantibodies including ANCA have been associated with hepatic disorders such as primary sclerosing cholangitis and autoimmune hepatitis, a high incidence of ANCA of the IgG isotype was detected in sera of biliary atresia patients (Vasiliauska *et al* .,1995).

THE AIM OF THE WORK

The aim of this work is to study the prevalence of ANCA in various chronic liver disorders in children. In addition, the prevalence of other autoantibodies : Antinuclear antibodies (ANA), smooth muscle antibodies (SMA), Antimitochondrial antibodies (AMA) and Liver kidney microsmol antibodies (LKM) have been studied.