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CLINICAL AND VIROLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH SEVERE ACUTE HEPATITIS B

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ABSTRACT

Aims: To identify early predictors of a severe or fulminant course in patients with acute viral hepatitis B (AVH-B).

Methods: 138 patients with symptomatic acute hepatitis B observed from 1999 to 2012 were enrolled. For each patient, the demographics, risk factors for the acquisition of HBV infection, clinical, biochemical and virological data (HBV DNA, HBV DNA sequences) were recorded and analyzed. The HBV mutants in the polymerase region were sought in 110 (87%) patients by direct sequencing, and the rtM204V/I mutations also by an allele-specific polymerase chain reaction.

Results: AVH-B was severe in 13 (9.4%) of the 138 patients enrolled, fulminant in 6 (4.3%) and with a normal clinical course in 119. The 19 patients with severe or fulminant AVH-B more

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