

July 28 - World Hepatitis Day

World Hepatitis Day is held annually on July 28 on the occasion of the birth of American physician and scientist Baruch Samuel Blumberg, whose discoveries have led to the elucidation and recognition of hepatitis B (jaundice) virus. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1976 for discovering new mechanisms of the emergence and spread of infectious diseases.

World Health Organization estimates that 325 million people are infected with viral hepatitis B (VHB) or C (VHC), of which 290 million (9 out of 10) are unaware of their disease. That's why this year's global campaign is headed by "Find the Missing Millions" and aims to raise awareness of the disease and address major obstacles to diagnosis and subsequent treatment of the disease.

Viral hepatitis A, B, C and E are widespread in the Moravian-Silesian Region. The incidence of hepatitis A (VHA) affects local epidemics, the highest incidence of the disease was last in 2010 and 2011, in 2018 10 cases were reported. As of July 19, 2019, the Regional Public Health Authority of the Moravian-Silesian Region („RPHA“) reported 10 cases of VHA. The largest share of reported infectious hepatitis is a form of chronic HCV, in 2018 were reported 123 cases of the disease, as of July 19, 2019 RPHA records 59 cases. There is also an upward trend in the incidence of hepatitis E (VHE), with 25 diseases reported in 2018 and 15 diseases reported till 19 July 2019. The number of VHB diseases is decreasing, this positive trend is influenced by the introduction of compulsory vaccination of children and special vaccination for employees at risk of illness.

Symptoms of the disease: Most often joint pain, muscles, digestive problems or pressure in the right ribs. Later dark urine, light faeces. Sometimes the disease may occur without any symptoms.

Recommendation: Against hepatitis A, which is transmitted via the faecal-oral route, the best way to prevent is vaccination in addition to hand hygiene after using the toilet and before eating, safe drinking water and food (especially when traveling to countries with low hygiene standards). Administration of 2 doses of vaccine gives immunity for at least 20 years.

In the case of hepatitis B and C (with regard to its transmission path), preventive measures include the elimination of risk behavior in the form of intravenous drug use with the sharing of application aids, conducting of accidental unprotected sex and hepatitis B. Vaccination against hepatitis B is obligatory in the Czech Republic; due to the professional risk of vaccination also health professionals are vaccinated. There is no vaccination against other hepatitis. Hepatitis E can be protected by sufficient heat treatment of pork, venison and avoiding the so-called cross-contamination of microorganisms of clean areas where uncooked food is handled.

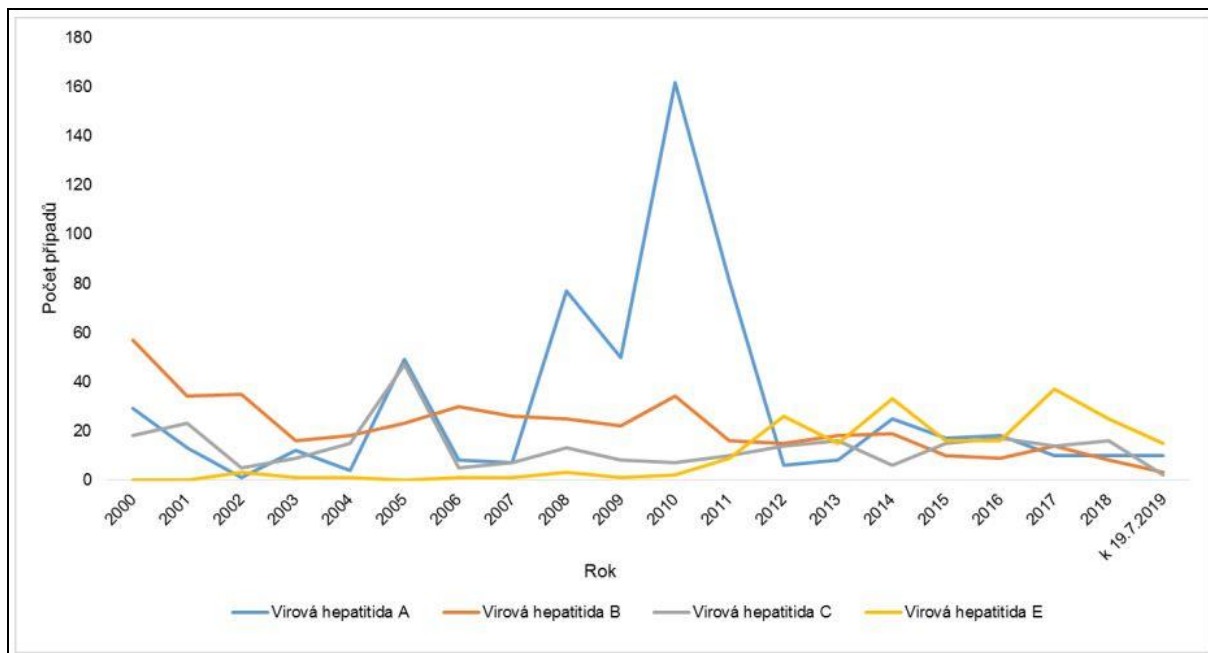


Fig. 1: Reported acute viral hepatitis, MS Region, 2000 - July 19, 2019

Axis Y – Number of cases, Axis X – Year
 Blue – Viral hepatitis A, Orange – Viral hepatitis B,
 Grey – Viral hepatitis C, Yellow – Viral hepatitis E