Preface

An Update in the Management of Chronic Hepatitis B

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This issue of Clinics in Liver Disease is dedicated to chronic hepatitis B, with several reviews from outstanding international experts.

Chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection, affecting approximately 350 to 400 million people worldwide, is associated with significant morbidity and mortality. Individuals with chronic HBV infection have an increased risk for cirrhosis, decompensated liver disease, and hepatocellular carcinoma. The availability of safe and effective vaccines has reduced the burden of diseases. However, HBV infection continues to be the cause of considerable morbidity and mortality. In these last 10 years, advances have been made in leading several therapeutic options, including pegylated-interferon-α and nucleoside and nucleotide analogs. Both entecavir and tenofovir have demonstrated considerable efficacy.

In this issue are reported results of treatment of chronic hepatitis B with pegylated interferon and with nucleoside and nucleotide analogs (entecavir and tenofovir). Of particular interest is the long-term outcome of patients receiving the most potent available antiviral drugs and also their long-term impact. The clinical significance of HBsAg quantification is discussed as well as its role as a new tool for predicting response to therapy. Furthermore, an outstanding review on HBV infection and hepatocellular carcinoma is provided. The optimal management of special populations and difficult situations is extensively discussed: HIV-HBV co-infection and cirrhosis; and HBV-related decompensated cirrhosis and liver-transplanted patients. A review on hepatitis D is included. Finally, the ultimate goal of this issue is to review the most
current knowledge and discuss therapeutic applications with the most experienced experts to provide optimal management of patients with HBV.

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