

10th June, 1953.

Dear Tovey,

Homologous Serum Jaundice

I had noted that you have recently reported three other cases of hepatitis following blood transfusion. I think this apparently high incidence needs watching. It is impossible at present to say whether it is significant.

The overall incidence following transfusion of blood to 856 patients, who have been followed up six months later in the Liverpool, Manchester and Cardiff regions, is 0.12%; this is very much smaller than the incidence found by Lehane in 1949, which was 0.8%. Unless some peculiar factor is operating in your region, I think your four cases need not be regarded too seriously. If cases continue at this rate, however, we shall have to try to find out why.

Liver function tests are generally regarded as of little value, because of the other conditions which may give positive results and because of the fact that 30-40% of known carriers give negative results. I have discussed the use of these tests many times with MacCallum, and he is very doubtful of their value.

Yours sincerely,

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