

A Study of Correlation Between Blood Groups and Anemia in Young Adults

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Abstract

Anaemia is a global nutritional problem common in developing countries. Most common type of anaemia is iron deficiency anaemia. Anaemia can be corrected by giving iron supplements and vitamins, but it has its own side effects when given on long term. So, this study aims to know whether there is any relation between blood group and occurrence of anaemia, so that preventive measures can be taken to combat anaemia in individuals who are more prone to it.

Methodology: The study is conducted on 198 MBBS students (males and females) who are in the age group of 18-25 years in Bidar institute of medical sciences, Bidar. Blood sample is taken using finger prick, under aseptic conditions and blood group is determined using glass slide method using antisera A, B and D. Hemoglobin concentration is estimated using Sahli's method.

Results: In our study we found that students with blood group B (24%) are more prone for anemia, followed by O (16%), AB (10%) and blood group A (8%). Blood group A almost resistant to anemia.

Conclusion: We can conclude that regular intake of iron and vitamin supplements could be suggested to the individuals who are more susceptible to anemia based on their blood groups.

Keywords: Blood group, Hemoglobin, Anaemia.

Introduction

Blood is a specialized connective tissue with complete and unchangeable identity. It provides one of the means of connection between the cells of different parts of the body and external environment. ¹ In modern medicine blood transfusion is an important measure for replacing blood loss. ² At least 30 commonly occurring antigens and hundreds of other rare antigen have been found in human blood cells, especially on the surfaces of the cell membranes. Most of the antigens are weak and therefore are of importance principally for studying

the inheritance of genes to establish parentage. Two particular types of antigens are much more likely than the others to cause blood transfusion reactions. They are the *O-A-B* system of antigens and the *Rh* system. ³ ABO and Rh are recognized as the major clinically significant blood group antigens.

The rhesus blood group system was the fourth system to be discovered. ¹ The ABO blood group individuals are divided into four major blood groups, namely, A, B, AB and O, according to the presence of antigens and agglutinins. Blood group A blood has type A antigens, blood group B has type B antigens and blood group O has neither A nor B antigens.

The Rhesus antigen (name because a related antigen was first discovered in Rhesus monkeys), is found in the red blood cells of approximately 85%-90% of the people. This is the second most important blood group system due to its immunogenicity in Rh negative individuals in blood transfusion or pregnancy. Rh positive individuals have RhD antigen on the surface of their red blood cells

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and Rh negative individuals do not have this antigen. Blood group antigens are not only important in relation to blood transfusion and organ transplantation, but also have some association with diseases like duodenal ulcer, diabetes mellitus, urinary tract infection and Rh incompatibility of the newborn.¹

As per the World Health Organization (WHO) database on anemia globally, anemia affects 1.62 billion people (95%), which corresponds to 24.8% of the population. WHO also estimates that anemia contributes to about 20% of maternal and perinatal death in developing countries^{4, 5}.

Anaemia can be defined by a condition in which the total haemoglobin (Hb) level or number of red blood cells (RBCs) is poorly lowered. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines anaemia as Hb<130 g/L in men older than 15 years, 110 g/L in pregnant women, and <120 g/L in non-pregnant women older than age 15.^{6, 7} Anemia is defined as a clinical condition which is characterized by reduction in hemoglobin concentration of the blood below the normal for the age.² It is a global problem, mainly affecting poor people in developing countries.^{2, 3} Anemia during adolescence severely impairs the physical and mental development; weakens behavioral & cognitive development; reduces physical fitness; decreases the work performance and even contributes to the adverse pregnancy outcome.¹ Though, the oral iron supplements are given commonly to correct anemia, but should be used only when dietary measures have failed. Moreover, iron supplement can correct anemia which is due to iron deficiency.⁴ Besides this, oral iron supplements can cause gastrointestinal problems like nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and constipation and can even aggravate pre-existing ulcers and ulcerative colitis. Long term iron supplements also can cause heart disease. Anaemia even can have a negative impact on physical performance, due to reduced oxygen transport the reduced cellular oxidative capacity.^{6, 8}

So, it would be better to combat anemia by giving the treatment to the population who are more prone to anemia. By determining the specific population prone or resistant to anemia, it would be easier to suggest specific dietary advice to prevent the occurrence of anemia in such a population.

Since blood groups have relation with anemia, the present study is conducted to prevent and treat anemia.

Table No. 1: WHO Definition of anaemia

Population	Hb Diagnostic of anaemia (g/dL)
Children aged 6 months to 6 years old	<11.0
Children aged 6-14 years old	<12.0
Adult men	<13.0
Adult non-pregnant women	<12.0
Adult pregnant women	<11.0

Aims and Objectives: To study and find out if there is any relation between blood group distribution and occurrence of anemia among students

Materials and Method: The study is conducted on 198 MBBS students (males and females) who are in the age group of 18-25 years in Bidar institute of medical sciences, Bidar. Blood sample is taken using finger prick, under aseptic conditions and blood group is determined using glass slide method using antisera A, B and D. Hemoglobin concentration is estimated using Sahli's method. The brief of the study and procedure is given to the subjects and informed consent taken.

Inclusion criteria: Young adults in the age group of 18-25 years, Healthy

Exclusion criteria: Subjects with acute or chronic infections

Statistical analysis: Frequency distribution and chi-square test

Findings: In our study, students with hemoglobin concentration less than 10g/dl were taken as anemic. Total 58 students are anemic, while remaining 140 students are non anaemic. 93 students are females out of which 50 are anemic whereas 105 students are males where only 8 males were found to be anemic. 56 students with Hb less than 10g/dl were Rh positive and 2 students Rh negative. 137 students and 3 students were Rh positive and Rh negative respectively with Hb more than 10g/dl. Also 45 students are blood group A, 22 with blood group AB, 68 with blood group B and O blood group students are 63. Among the A blood group, 8 students were anemic, among blood group B, 24 were anemic, among blood group AB, 10 were anemic and 16 students with O blood group were anemic.

In our study we found that students with blood group B (24%) are more prone for anemia, followed by O (16%), AB (10%) and blood group A (8%). Blood group A almost resistant to anemia.

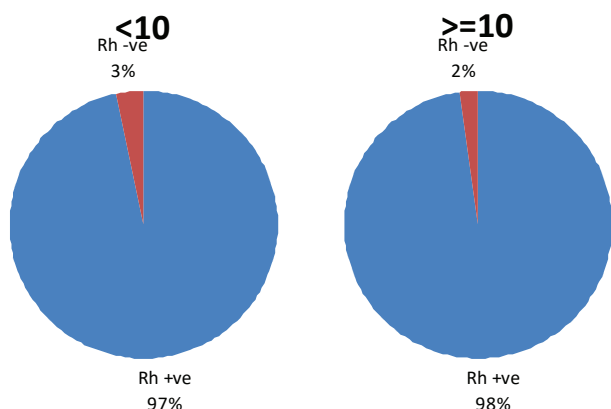


Diagram 1. Anaemic status in Rh positive and Rh negative students

Table No. 2: Distribution of anaemic and non-anaemic students

Hb	Frequency	Percentage
<10	58	29.3
>=10	140	70.7
Total	198	100.0

Table No. 3: Anaemic status in males and females

Sex	Hb		Total
	<10	>=10	
Female	50	43	93
Male	8	97	105
Total	58	140	198

$\chi^2 = 50.70, p < 0.0001$

Table No. 4: Different blood group status in anaemic and non anaemic students

Blood group	Hb		Total
	<10	>=10	
A +ve	8	35	39
A -ve	0	2	2
AB+ve	8	12	5
AB-ve	2	0	1
B -ve	0	1	1
B+ve	24	43	61
O +ve	16	47	63
Total	58	140	198

$\chi^2 = 7.06, p = 0.13$

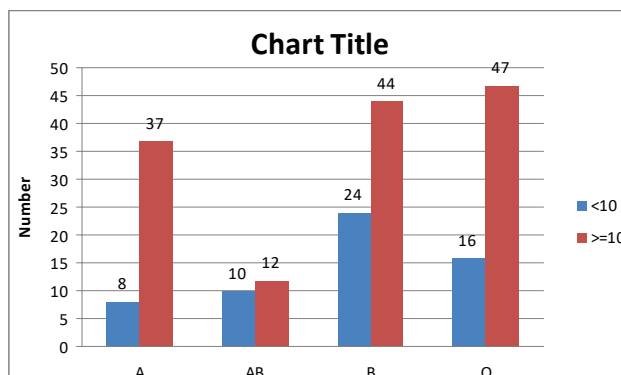


Diagram 2. Association of anaemic status with blood groups

Discussion

In our study, the distribution of blood group B was the highest with a percentage frequency of 68%, followed by blood group O and A with a percentage frequency of 63 and 45% respectively and the least percentage frequency is that of blood group AB which is 22%. The prevalence of anaemia in our study was found in blood group B, followed by O, AB and then A. The same trend of prevalence of blood groups (B>O>A>AB) was observed and reported by study conducted by Kaur M. In many other studies, blood group O has been found to be the most common blood group. The frequency

of Rh+ve was about 97.4%, while 2.7% were Rh-ve in our study. Similar patterns of distribution were also observed in other studies. Thus, the frequencies of ABO and rhesus blood groups vary from one population to another. On further evaluating the distribution of subjects according to blood groups and their relationship to anemia it was found that anemia was more frequent in blood group B (41.2%) followed by blood group AB (40.0%), A (33.3%) and least in the blood group O (25.8%) but it was not statistically significant (p=0.122). Similar findings were seen in the study conducted by Basak Asim Kumar, ⁵ in which individuals having blood group B, A or AB were prone to anemia compared to

blood group O but was statistically significant. On the other hand, there was no such relationship between Rh factor and the occurrence of anemia between the above mentioned populations. Anemia during adolescence severely impairs the physical and mental development; weakens behavioral and cognitive development; reduces physical fitness; decreases the work performance and even contributes to the adverse pregnancy outcome Mild anemia can adversely affect the productivity and is also known to reduce the immune-competence. The average prevalence of anemia is 25-80% seen in several studies across the Indian subcontinent in a study conducted by ICMR in sixteen districts in eleven different states reporting a prevalence rate of anemia 90.1% among the adolescent girls of 11-18 years age groups. In their study, 35% anemia was seen in the 300 students studied. In further evaluating gender wise it was found that anemia was significantly more in the girls (44.8%) compared to the boys (17.6%) with a 'p' value of 0.0001. The similar higher prevalence of anemia was found in the rural girls (98%) and boys (56%) of Punjab. This study reveals that there is a relationship between blood group and anemia, though not statistically significant which could be due to small sample size. Similar finding was found in our study where girls are more prone to anaemia. The individuals with blood group antigen alpha and beta are comparatively more prone to be anemia, whereas the individuals devoid of these anti gens are resistant to anemia. So, the regular intake of iron and vitamin rich diet in individuals having blood groups A, B, and AB can prevent the occurrence of anemia.

Conclusion

We conclude that individuals with blood group B are more prone to anaemia followed by blood group O, AB and least is with blood group A. Based on their blood groups, we can advice regular intake of diet rich in iron

and vitamins or also their supplements to the individual who are more susceptible to anaemia.

Conflict of Interest: None

Source of Funding: Self

Ethical Clearance: Taken

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