
SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT WITH INTERFERON THERAPY OF HEPATITIS C POSITIVE OPIATE ADDICTS WHO ARE IN SUBSTITUTION MAINTENANCE THERAPY WITH BUPRENORPHINE/NALOXONE (SUBOXONE®)

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Hepatitis C is highly infected disease with long period of failure to recognize it, what leads to chronic liver damage and lower chances for complete cure if detected late. Intravenous (IV) opiate users are not aware when be infected from virus carriers using the same non-sterile equipment so they pass the infection to other IV drug users. By implementation of substitution treatment of opiate addicts with Buprenorphine/Naloxone (Suboxone) at the Department of Psychiatry in Tuzla on 27 July 2009 year, we made the obligatory serological tests for hepatitis B and C and HIV, as well as laboratory findings with liver function parameter analysis as a condition for starting substitution therapy. In this way we discovered 50/195 opiate addicts hepatitis C positive. Although faced with danger of the final result if not treated in time, addicts when became aware that they were hepatitis C positive, they avoid further needed procedures leading to the inclusion of specific therapy with pegylated interferon. In this paper, the authors presented the procedure of multidisciplinary approach of treatment of hepatitis C positive opiate addicts despite their resistances they do not occur on the continuation of the procedure detecting HCV genotypes, and the inclusion of specific therapy for the treatment of hepatitis C in the clinics for infectious or internal diseases. At the end, the authors present eleven clinical vignettes of successful treatment of hepatitis C in opiate addicts realized with multidisciplinary team. All of the treated individuals, after finished interferon treatment appeared hepatitis C negative.