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Serologial screening of human T cell lymphotropic virus I and II (HTLV I/II) in blood banks by immunoblotting and enzyme-immuno assays: to demand or to defeat?

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Human T cell lymphotropic virus I and II (HTLV I/II) has been recommended to be screened for blood donors since 1988, and it become a mandatory test to get college of american Pathologists (CAP) accreditation. The present study aimed at investigating the prevalence rate of HTLV I/II among Arab blood donors, to revise whether is its screening mandatory? Thirty-thousand (30,000) Arab donors along two years attending two central hospital blood banks in Jeddah. Antibodies to HTLV I/II have been screened using enzyme immunoassay (E.I.A) and immunoblotting assay (Western blot). Results revealed zero prevalence rate. Based upon this finding, no potential risk of HTLV I/II transmission among blood donors population exist. As screening for HTLV I/II is still mandatory, it could be done on pools of sera rather than on individual serum samples, after standardization of a pooling protocol, to fulfill coast-effectiveness and reduce the coasts by 90-95%.