The Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean, in its 56th session, in October 2009, resolved that the regional goal for hepatitis B control would be to reduce the prevalence of chronic hepatitis B infection to less than 1% among children less than five years by 2015.

Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent hepatitis B. Hepatitis B childhood vaccination has resulted in a significant reduction of hepatitis B infections among vaccinated cohorts. The average regional coverage of third dose of hepatitis B-containing vaccine increased from 39% to 84% between 2000 and 2010.

The main challenge facing achieving the regional target for hepatitis B is the lack of implementation of the birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine in the high burden countries and the low coverage of the actual birth dose (given within 24 hours of birth) in most of the countries that implement the birth dose.

[The growing threats of hepatitis B and C in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: a call for action]

Saturday 13th of July 2024 12:48:40 AM