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HEREDITARY ELLIPTOCYTOSIS IN BAHRAIN

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Hereditary elliptocytosis an abnormality of red blood cell may provide a selective advantage to protect against malaria. We screened 2000 Bahraini blood donors and found 42 cases of hereditary elliptocytosis. Clinical and haematological aspects were analysed in 100 consecutively diagnosed cases of hereditary elliptocytosis among Bahraini patients. Their ages ranged from 46 hours to 75 hours. Female preponderance was observed in the adult age group. Majority of patients presented with anaemia. Low haemoglobin and low red cell indices were noticed in all age groups. However the condition was found to exist in three forms as clinically silent, disease with transient haemolysis, and as a chronic haemolytic process. Thus a peripheral smear examination to screen for elliptocytosis is warranted in all anaemic Bahraini patients.

Hereditary Elliptocytosis (HE) is an autosomal dominant condition in which an abnormality of the red cells cytoskeleton leads to their oval appearance. Because the condition is usually benign, many healthy people are unaware of the abnormality of their red cell. Frequent documentation of cases of elliptocytosis in routine haematology lead us to study this disorder in the Bahraini population and to evaluate the risk involved when their blood is accepted for the purpose of transfusion.