Cheap Antihistamine Combats Hepatitis C in Mice

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An inexpensive over-the-counter allergy drug has been found to inhibit hepatitis C virus (HCV) in mice, opening the possibility that the antihistamine may one day become a part of the treatment arsenal, Time Magazine reports. Publishing their findings in Science Translational Medicine, researchers gave chlorcyclizine HCl (CCZ) to hep C–infected mice that had been grafted with human liver cells.

The drug appeared to limit the virus's capacity to replicate in liver cells, similar to the effects of approved hep C therapies, but without toxic side effects.

The next step will be to test CCZ's effects in people, a process that should proceed at an accelerated clip since the drug is already approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In the meantime, researchers caution that people with hep C should not attempt to treat the virus themselves with the drug.

To read the press release, click here.

To read the Time story, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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