Another Study Finds Transplanting Hep C-Infected Organs Is Safe

People without hep C received kidney, liver or heart transplants from HCV-positive donors and then were treated for the virus.

November 28, 2018 By Benjamin Ryan

People without hepatitis C virus (HCV) can safely receive organ transplants from HCV-positive donors, Medscape Medical News reports.

Presenting their findings at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases in San Francisco (The Liver Meeting), researchers recruited 75 HCV-negative transplantation candidates who agreed to receive an organ from an HCV-positive donor. Doing so resulted in less time spent on the transplant wait list.

Seventy-two percent of the cohort received a kidney, 14.7 percent received a liver and 13.3 percent received a heart. Most contracted hep C as a result of their transplant.

Thirty-three of the individuals have been treated with Mavyret (glecaprevir/pibrentasvir), 19 have received Harvoni (ledipasvir/sofosbuvir) and two have received Epclusa (sofosbuvir/velpatasvir).

Of the 27 people who have completed 12 weeks of treatment, none had a detectable virus upon finishing treatment. Of the 45 people who have completed four weeks of treatment, 35 (78 percent) had an undetectable virus at that time. To be deemed cured of hep C, an individual needs to have an undetectable viral load 12 weeks after completing treatment.

Two members of the study died as a result of cardiopulmonary complications following receiving liver transplants.

The most common adverse health event among those on HCV treatment was headache. None of the participants have stopped treatment early.

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