



Cirrhosis Is Linked With a Higher Risk of Stroke

The risk is higher for hemorrhagic stroke, which entails bleeding in the brain.

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People with cirrhosis of the liver have a higher risk of stroke, in particular hemorrhagic stroke, which entails bleeding in the brain, MedPage Today reports.

Publishing their findings in *JAMA Neurology*, researchers conducted a retrospective cohort study of Medicare data covering 2008 to 2014. They drew a random sample of 1,618,059 Medicare beneficiaries older than 66.

A total of 15,586 of the beneficiaries (1 percent) had cirrhosis. This group had an average age of 74; 47 percent of them were female.

During an average 4.3 years of follow-up, 77,268 individuals in the overall group were hospitalized with a stroke. The annual stroke rate was 2.17 percent among those with cirrhosis and 1.11 percent among those without cirrhosis.

After adjusting the data for demographic characteristics and stroke risk factors, the researchers found that those with cirrhosis had a 1.4-fold higher risk of stroke than those without cirrhosis. Broken down by types of stroke, compared with those without cirrhosis, those with cirrhosis had a respective 1.9-fold, 2.4-fold and 1.3-fold higher risk of intracerebral hemorrhage (a ruptured blood vessel causes bleeding in the brain), subarachnoid hemorrhage (bleeding in the space between the brain and the tissue that covers the brain) and ischemic stroke (an artery to the brain is blocked).

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