Curing Hepatitis C Boosts Lymphoma Treatment Outcomes

This finding from a study of people with both diseases underlines the importance of treating the virus.

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Among those with hepatitis C virus (HCV) and lymphoma, curing the virus is associated with improved treatment outcomes for the blood cancer, Healio reports.

Sanjal H. Desai, MD, of Medstar Health in Baltimore, and colleagues conducted a study of 40 people with HCV and lymphoma, 22 of whom cleared the virus. Desai presented findings at the American Society of Hematology Annual Meeting in Orlando this month.

Twenty-one (95%) of those who achieved clearance of HCV had an overall response to lymphoma treatment, meaning complete or partial cancer regression, compared with 11 (69%) of those who did not clear the virus. This meant that clearing the virus was associated with a 2.4-fold greater likelihood of having an overall response to lymphoma treatment. Sixteen (73%) of those with viral clearance and six (38%) of those without had a complete response to lymphoma treatment, making viral clearance associated with a 2.3-fold greater likelihood of complete response.

Among those who did not clear HCV, the median overall survival was 89 months. Those who did clear the virus had not yet reached their median overall survival point. In fact, most of those with viral clearance were alive at the end of the study's follow-up period.

All of those with aggressive non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL) and viral clearance had an overall response to lymphoma treatment, compared with 70% of their counterparts without viral clearance. Thus, in this group, viral clearance was associated with a 1.4-fold increased likelihood of an overall response.

A complete response to treatment was also seen in all those with aggressive NHL and viral clearance, compared with 46% of their counterparts without viral clearance. So clearing the virus was associated with a 2.2-fold greater chance of a complete response.

One hundred percent of those with diffuse large B-cell lymphoma and viral clearance had a complete response to lymphoma treatment compared with 45% of their counterparts without clearance. This meant that viral clearance was associated with 2.2-fold greater likelihood of a

complete response in this group.

These findings underscore the importance of treating HCV among those with lymphoma.

To read the Healio article, click here.

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