Monoclonal Antibody May Protect Transplanted Livers from Hep C

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A new antibody being developed by MassBiologics of the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Boston may help protect the liver against hepatitis C virus (HCV), according to new data from a chimpanzee study conducted at the Texas Biomedical Research Institute and published August 30 in the online journal PLoS Pathogens. The monoclonal antibody, dubbed HCV1, binds to the surface of the virus and blocks its ability to enter liver cells. This may prove useful for people living with hepatitis C undergoing liver transplant surgery who face a high risk of recurrent cirrhosis and cannot tolerate standard HCV treatments needed to prevent virus in the blood from attacking the new organ. Though HCV1 is currently being evaluated in humans, it was also studied in chimpanzees, as they are the only other species that can be infected by HCV. “This is an important preclinical proof-of-concept [discovery] demonstrating a high dose of neutralizing antibody can protect the liver from HCV infection in a study that was designed to mimic the transplantation setting,” said study coauthor Robert E. Lanford, PhD, of the Texas Biomedical Research Institute in an accompanying news announcement.

To read the PLoS Pathogens article (free access), click here.
To read to Texas Biomed news announcement, click here.

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