Comparing Hep B- Versus Hep C-Related Liver Cancer Outcomes

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Treatment outcome and survival is similar between those with hepatitis B virus- (HBV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV)-related liver cancer, although those with advanced tumors and hep B have lower survival rates. Publishing their findings in PLOS ONE, researchers analyzed a nationwide cohort of people in Korea with hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC, the most common form of liver cancer) that was drawn from the Korea Central Cancer Registry between 2003 and 2005.

The investigators randomly drew a sample of 4,630 people from the 31,521 new HCC cases in the registry during that time period and winnowed the cohort down to the 2,785 hep B-related and 447 hep C-related liver cancer cases.

The mean annual incidence of hep B-related HCC per 100,000 people was 20.8, compared with a 4.9 per 100,000 rate of hep C-related liver cancer. Tumors at least 5 centimeters in diameter and portal vein invasion upon diagnosis of liver cancer were more common among those with hep B-related HCC. On the other hand, multiple tumors were more common among hep C-related liver cancer.

The median survival for those with hep B-related HCC was 1.34 years, compared with 2.17 years for those with hep C-related liver cancer. After adjusting for various factors, the researchers deduced that having hep B-related cancer lowered the risk of death by 12 percent when compared with having hep C-related HCC. But when the researchers parsed the data based on the stage of the tumors, there was only a difference in survival rates for those with stage IV tumors. The outcomes of various means of treating HCC, including resection, ablation and transartherial chemoeombolization, were similar between the hep B- and hep C-related HCC.

To read the study, click here.

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