New Blood Test Could Change How People With Hepatitis Are Screened for Fibrosis

July 14, 2016

A new blood test to help doctors quickly discover and monitor advanced liver fibrosis among people diagnosed with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) recently received an official nod from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Experts say the test is less invasive, more accurate and far more convenient compared with liver biopsies or scans, which previously have been the industry standard, Laboratory Network reports.

NICE's new evidence-based guidelines recommend the use of the enhanced liver fibrosis (ELF) test, created by Siemens Healthineers, to diagnose and track the degree of liver damage in people living with NAFLD. The test requires only a blood sample and produces results within an hour. The ELF test is now recommended for all NAFLD patients, with retesting every three years for adults and every two years for children and young people diagnosed with the condition.

Until now, the preferred method for detecting liver damage in people living with NAFLD was an invasive biopsy, a surgical procedure that samples a small portion of the liver to determine its level of fibrosis. However, recent studies have shown that biopsies can lead to misdiagnosis in 20 to 40 percent of people with hepatitis and may cause pain and bleeding.

With the ELF test, a primary care provider can include liver fibrosis monitoring among a patient's routine blood tests. Experts say it is far more accurate, cost-efficient and quicker than other existing options. According to NICE, the ELF test is also clinically validated for testing liver fibrosis scores in people with viral and alcoholic hepatitis.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/article/new-blood-test-change-people-hepatitis-screened-fibrosis