



# Treat Hep C, Prevent Cancer

June 5, 2013 By [Benjamin Ryan](#)

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Hepatitis C treatment appears to cut in half the rates of liver cancer among those with fibrosis or cirrhosis (scarring of the liver), according to a Danish study. The analysis examined eight randomized controlled trials comparing antiviral therapy—interferon or pegylated-interferon as monotherapy or paired with ribavirin—to a placebo or no treatment. Those who responded well to treatment had an even greater likelihood of thwarting cancer. This is especially good news as today's treatments are vastly more effective than those studied in these trials, with new drugs likely hitting the market in the near future and promising even higher cure rates.

The outdated nature of the treatments analyzed, however, is a major limitation of the trial because current treatments all use pegylated-interferon over interferon, plus ribavirin, as a backbone.

Nina Kimer, MD, of Copenhagen University Hospital Hvidovre in Denmark, who is the lead author of the study, says, "Hopefully our results will speed the process of getting people into treatment. And also will show that interferon is not wasted, even if you don't have a sustained virologic response."

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