Studies about Children with Hepatitis C at AASLD

November 19, 2015 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

As far as liver meetings go, this was the best I've ever attended. I was impressed by the efforts of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD), and proud to be a member.

The one disappointment was the lack of hepatitis C research for children. Out of 2267 abstracts, there was only one pediatric hep C poster on treatment, a small Harvoni pharmacokinetics study in teens. Granted, children are a small portion of the overall hep C cases, but they don't have access to the new direct-acting antivirals (DAAs) that are used to treat adults. It's a shame. It makes much more sense to me to treat kids before they leave home, before they start piercing, tattooing, being blood brothers/sisters, or engaging in vampire play. Granted, we need to tread carefully and scientifically, but children are often understudied. If scientists could conduct peginterferon-based hep C research in kids, surely they can do DAA studies.

The one area that the study of liver disease in children got attention was in fatty liver disease. Yes, children are developing lifestyle-related liver disease at a young age. It is very distressing. If you have kids or grandkids, find ways to keep them active.

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