

Liver Cancer Risk Higher for People With Well-Treated Hep B Versus Hep C

However, no such difference was seen among those with cirrhosis or those whose virus was not well treated.

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The risk of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC, the most common form of liver cancer) is higher among those with well-treated hepatitis B virus (HBV) compared with those cured of hepatitis C virus (HCV). However, in a recent study, this difference was not seen among those with cirrhosis of the liver or those who were not well treated for either virus.

Publishing their findings in the *Journal of Viral Hepatology*, researchers analyzed data on 2,000 people with hep B who were treated with Baraclude (entecavir) and 733 people with hep C who were treated with interferon and ribavirin (the standard treatment at the time of the study) at one hospital between 2004 and 2011.

People with hep B were considered well treated if they had a viral load below 15 after one year of Baraclude treatment; those with hep C were considered well treated if they achieved a sustained virologic response, which is considered a cure. A respective 1,520 (76 percent) and 475 (64.8 percent) of those with HBV and HCV fell into this category.

During a median follow-up of six years, 228 (11.4 percent) of those with hep B and 59 (8 percent) of those with hep C were diagnosed with liver cancer.

Compared with those with well-treated hep C, those with well-treated hep B had a 2.17-fold increased likelihood of being diagnosed with liver cancer during the follow-up period. There was no such difference in liver cancer risk between those with hep B and those with hep C if they were not well treated for either virus. Additionally, among those who started the study with cirrhosis, there was no difference in liver cancer risk based on having hep B versus hep C, even if the study members did wind up well treated for their virus.

To read the study abstract, [click here](#).