

Journal of the National Cancer Institute Publishes Summary of Hepatitis B Foundation's Liver Cancer Workshop

Leaders in liver cancer outline ways to improve early detection of hepatocellular carcinoma



DOYLESTOWN, Pa. (December 2015) – The Journal of the National Cancer Institute has published a paper submitted by the Hepatitis B Foundation in collaboration with thought leaders in the field focused on improving screening and care for those with liver cancer related to chronic hepatitis infections. The article, “Hepatitis-Associated Liver Cancer: Gaps and Opportunities to Improve Care,” has been [published online](#) and

will appear in the journal's April 2016 print issue.

It summarizes the findings of a workshop the Hepatitis B Foundation hosted in March 2015 that discussed ways to improve the recognition of liver disease in general, improve the recognition of liver cancer risk, and improve public awareness that screening for hepatocellular carcinoma (primary liver cancer) makes a life-saving difference.

“We know that primary prevention of hepatocellular carcinoma relies on prevention and treatment of viral hepatitis and other underlying etiologies,” said co-author Dr. Morris Sherman, a renowned hepatologist and Chairman of the Board of the Canadian Liver Foundation and a past president of the Canadian Association for the Study of Liver Diseases. “Too many people are not diagnosed with liver cancer until it reaches a late stage, and treatment for advanced disease is still lacking. Earlier diagnosis must be substantially improved if we are to save lives.”

The article reflects the conclusions reached by 20 of the nation's leaders in liver cancer, who came together in a workshop hosted by the Hepatitis B Foundation. Their goal was to identify gaps and limitations in current approaches to the detection and treatment of hepatocellular carcinoma, or HCC, and to define research priorities and opportunities for advocacy.

“The global burden of primary liver cancer is increasing, because too often, the disease does not present clear, recognizable symptoms,” said Dr. Timothy Block, president and co-founder of the Hepatitis B Foundation and its research arm, the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute. “Patients who are unaware of their disease can't fight their disease. Increasing practitioner awareness, better definition of at-risk populations, and improved screening can help give patients the knowledge they need to combat liver cancer early, when treatment is most effective.”

Co-authors of the article include:

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In addition to the authors, the following individuals participated in the 2015 Princeton HCC Workshop and contributed to the discussions of the findings and recommendations: Drs. Hashem El-Serag, Stuart Gordon, Tim Greten, Yujin Hoshida, Anand Mehta, Edith Mitchell, Jo Ann Rinaudo, Kirti Shetty, Michael Soulen, Ying-Hsiu Su, Xin Wei Wang.

The Journal of the National Cancer Institute publishes peer-reviewed original research from around the world and is a well-respected source of up-to-date news and information from the rapidly changing fields of cancer research and treatment.

Hepatitis B is the most common serious liver infection in the world. An estimated 2 billion people, or 1 out of every 3, have been infected with the hepatitis B virus. Of those, more than 240 million people have become chronically infected, which means they are unable to rid their bodies of the virus. An estimated 1 million people die each year from hepatitis B and its complications, including liver cancer.

About the Hepatitis B Foundation: The Hepatitis B Foundation was founded in 1991 and is the only national nonprofit organization solely dedicated to finding a cure for hepatitis B and improving the quality of life for those affected worldwide through research, education and patient advocacy. To learn more, visit www.hepb.org.

About the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute: The Baruch S. Blumberg Institute is an independent, nonprofit research institute established in 2003 by the Hepatitis B Foundation to fulfill its research mission and to conduct discovery research and nurture translational biotechnology in an environment conducive to interaction, collaboration and focus. The research center was renamed in 2013 to honor Baruch S. Blumberg, who co-founded the Foundation and won the Nobel Prize for his discovery of the hepatitis B virus. To learn more, visit www.blumberginstitute.org.

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