

Hepatitis B Foundation
Princeton Workshop
Reducing Liver Cancer
March 17-19, 2015
Princeton, New Jersey

The Hepatitis B Foundation (HBF) biennial Princeton Workshop was held on March 17-19, 2015, in Princeton, New Jersey. Led by Dr. Brian McMahon, member of HBF's Medical and Scientific Advisory Board, and Dr. Timothy Block, HBF president, the workshop focused on hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), or primary liver cancer, which is the world's second leading cause of cancer deaths.

As the fastest growing cancer in incidence in the U.S. with a five-year survival rate of only 10%, liver cancer is on track to become the third leading cancer killer in the country by 2030, according to Dr. Hashem El-Serag, who also gave the HBF *Distinguished Bruce Witte Lecture* after the workshop.

Dr. Morris Sherman, who co-authored the HCC screening and management guidelines for the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases, noted that compliance with current guidelines is poor as most patients were unaware of their risk and were not in screening programs. More certainly needs to be done to improve compliance by both patients and providers.

Key highlights from the workshop included the powerful role of genotypes in development of HCC, presentation of HCC in low incidence populations, and promising new approaches for the early detection of liver cancer, including biomarkers and an algorithm that provides a "risk score" to identify individuals with cirrhosis and liver cancer.

Acknowledging that several drugs in development have failed in patients with advanced HCC, scientists from the NIH's National Cancer Institute reviewed the potential of immunotherapy for HCC treatment. The heterogeneous nature of HCC, however, makes a single agent unlikely to be universally effective, so combination therapies may need to be pursued.



HBF gathers liver cancer experts for 2015 Princeton HCC Workshop to identify research needs for improving screening and treatment of liver cancer. *Front row, L to R: Joan Block, Timothy Block, Edith Mitchell, Ying-Hsiu Su, Thomas London, Chari Cohen, Jo Ann Rinaudo, Alison Evans, Kirti Shetty, Anu Hosangadi. Back row, L to R: Xin Wei Wang, Brian McMahon, Yujin Hoshida, Hashem El-Serag, Morris Sherman, Michael Soulen, Anand Mehta, Tim Greten, Stuart Gordon. (March 2015)*