Coffee Helps Minimize Hepatitis C Treatment Side Effects

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Is there anything a good cup of coffee (or three) can't do?

Not only does coffee consumption slow liver disease progression and increase the chances of success while undergoing treatment for chronic hepatitis C infection, but drinking three or more cups a day also appears to reduce the incidence of hep C treatment side effects by more than 80 percent.

These findings, suggesting that coffee may greatly improve the tolerability of hepatitis C treatment, were presented at the 10th AIDS Impact conference, held from September 12 to 15 in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and reported by aidsmap.

The HEPAVIH ANRS CO13 study, aidsmap explains, is a cohort study of hepatitis C/HIV coinfected patients taking pegylated interferon/ribavirin hepatitis C therapy.

About 100 people coinfected with hepatitis C virus (HCV) and HIV were asked whether they drank coffee and, if so, how much. They were also asked to report side effects of their hepatitis C treatment.

People drinking three or more cups of coffee a day were 81 percent less likely to report discomforting side effects than people reporting none. The likelihood of reporting side effects decreased by 36 percent for every cup of coffee consumed.

The researchers, aidsmap reports, noted that the positive effects could be due to caffeine combating the fatigue and lack of concentration and alertness often reported by patients undergoing hepatitis C treatment. Further research into the benefits of coffee consumption and/or caffeine was recommended.

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