Hep C Not Highly Linked With Mortality, Absent Other Conditions

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Hepatitis C virus (HCV) doesn't have the greatest impact on mortality unless it occurs in conjunction with other severe diseases, such as HIV, cancer or chronic kidney disease, or alcohol use disorders, according to a recent study. The study, which was presented at the 50th International Liver Congress in Vienna, Austria, also found also found that, among all hospitalized people, alcohol use disorders (AUD) are better predictors of the risk of death than HCV infection.

The researchers analyzed data on 28,953,755 adults in metropolitan France who were hospitalized between 2008 and 2012. Of this group, 1,506,453 died in the hospital. The individuals were characterized according to various health conditions and tracked over time. A total of 112,146 people (0.39 percent) had hep C, 705,259 (2.44 percent) had AUD, and 23,351 had both, meaning that 20.8 percent of those with hep C had AUD.

The researchers found that hep C was most strongly associated with a higher risk of death when individuals had other severe health conditions, such as HIV or a transplanted liver. Without any such health conditions, HCV-positive people's risk of end-stage liver disease and death was mostly explained by whether or not they had AUD.

After adjusting for various factors, the researchers found that having hep C was associated with a 1.9-fold increased risk of death, while AUD was linked to a 3.13-fold increased risk. Without any other severe health problems, those with hep C did not have a statistically significant increased risk of death in the hospital.

To read the press release and study abstract, click here.

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