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IN BRIEF

LIVER

Is there a familial predisposition to alcoholic liver disease?

Ali *et al.* recruited two cohorts of heavy drinkers (>60 units per week for men or >40 units for women): 291 with decompensated alcoholic liver disease and 208 with no evidence of liver disease (controls). Data were collected regarding drinking behaviour and the presence of liver disease in parents and siblings of cases and controls. Analysis of these data did not reveal a strong familial predisposition to alcoholic liver disease; the authors believe environmental factors are probably more important.

Original article Ali, A. K. *et al.* Familial predisposition to alcoholic liver disease: a case-control study. *Eur. J. Gastroenterol. Hepatol.* doi:10.1097/MEG.0b013e328353a367

CANCER

The global burden of cancers attributable to infections

Around 2 million new cancer cases in 2008 were attributable to infections. Of these, 1.9 million cancers (mainly gastric, liver and cervix uteri) were caused by *Helicobacter pylori*, HBV, HCV and human papillomaviruses. In men, liver and gastric cancers accounted for more than 80% of new cases. The researchers conclude that vaccination strategies, safer injection practices and antimicrobial treatments could have a substantial effect on the future burden of cancer.

Original article de Martel, C. *et al.* Global burden of cancers attributable to infections in 2008: a review and synthetic analysis. *Lancet Oncol.* doi:10.1016/S1470-2045(12)70137-7

ESOPHAGUS

Eotaxin-3 expression levels are similar in oesophageal squamous cells from patients with GERD or EE

Oesophageal expression of eotaxin-3, stimulated by T_H2 cytokines, is thought to contribute to oesophageal eosinophilia in patients with eosinophilic oesophagitis (EE), but the effects of T_H2 cytokines in GERD are not known. Cheng *et al.* found no significant differences in eotaxin-3 expression levels stimulated by T_H2 cytokines in oesophageal squamous cells from patients with GERD or EE. Omeprazole was found to block expression of eotaxin-3, suggesting that PPIs might have eosinophil-reducing effects independent of their effects on acid reflux.

Original article Cheng, E. *et al.* Omeprazole blocks eotaxin-3 expression by oesophageal squamous cells from patients with eosinophilic oesophagitis and GORD. *Gut* doi:10.1136/gutjnl-2012-302250

IBD

Validating a new knowledge assessment tool in pregnant women with IBD

Managing IBD during pregnancy can require complex therapeutic decision-making. However, it is not always clear how much patients know about treatment choices. 145 women with IBD were recruited to validate a new knowledge assessment tool (Crohn's and Colitis Pregnancy Knowledge Score—CCPKnow). This tool was found to be consistent and reliable. Nearly half of the women were found to have poor knowledge, emphasizing the need for improved education.

Original article Selinger, C. P. *et al.* Patients' knowledge of pregnancy-related issues in inflammatory bowel disease and validation of a novel assessment tool ('CCPKnow'). *Aliment. Pharmacol. Ther.* doi:10.1111/j.1365-2036.2012.05130.x