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IN BRIEF

VIRAL HEPATITIS

Improving sustained virologic response in postmenopausal women with chronic HCV infection

The low sustained virologic response (SVR) rates observed in postmenopausal women with chronic HCV infection might be associated with reduced oestrogen secretion. Furusyo *et al.* randomly assigned 123 postmenopausal women with HCV infection to receive raloxifene hydrochloride (a selective oestrogen receptor modulator) plus standard of care (SOC) treatment, or SOC alone. 24 weeks after treatment, the SVR rate was significantly higher in the women who received the combined therapy than in those who received SOC alone.

Original article Furusyo, N. *et al.* Raloxifene hydrochloride is an adjuvant antiviral treatment of postmenopausal women with chronic hepatitis C: a randomized trial. *J. Hepatol.* doi:10.1016/j.jhep.2012.08.003

IBS

Rectal motor function in patients with IBS

Patients with IBS have visceral hypersensitivity. Serotonergic modulation can alter visceral perception and be of benefit in some patients with IBS; however, it is unclear whether serotonergic modulation alters rectal motor function in these patients. In a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled, crossover study, acute tryptophan depletion and citalopram (a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor) did not affect rectal motor function in healthy control individuals or patients with diarrhoea-predominant IBS.

Original article van Nieuwenhoven, M. A. & Kilkens, T. O. C. The effect of acute serotonergic modulation on rectal motor function in diarrhea-predominant irritable bowel syndrome and healthy controls. *Eur. J. Gastroenterol. Hepatol.* doi:10.1097/MEG.0b013e3283583cf5

IBD

Genetic factors and adverse pouch outcomes in patients with ulcerative colitis

A study published in *Gut* has shown that certain genetic polymorphisms are associated with adverse pouch outcomes after ileal pouch–anal anastomosis in patients with ulcerative colitis. Genetic and clinical information was available for 714 individuals. The *NOD2*insC risk allele was significantly associated with chronic pouchitis and a Crohn's disease-like phenotype after surgery. Other polymorphisms were also found to be associated with pouch outcome, although with slightly weaker effects.

Original article Tyler, A. D. *et al.* The *NOD2*insC polymorphism is associated with worse outcome following ileal pouch–anal anastomosis for ulcerative colitis. *Gut* doi:10.1136/gutjnl-2011-301957

MOLECULAR IMAGING

Imaging bile acid transport in single living cells

A new technique has been developed that enables real-time monitoring of bile acid transport in single living cells. A genetically encoded fluorescent sensor enables visualization of uptake and accumulation of conjugated bile acids. This technique could increase understanding of the role bile acids have in metabolism and absorption of dietary lipids and vitamins.

Original article van der Velden, L. M. *et al.* Monitoring bile acid transport in single living cells using a genetically encoded FRET sensor. *Hepatology* doi:10.1002/hep.26012