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IN BRIEF

HEPATITIS

Insulin resistance is not predictive of virologic response to telaprevir

Insulin resistance is a predictor of poor response to PEG-IFN- α and ribavirin in patients with chronic HCV infection, but data are lacking for direct-acting antivirals. Serfaty *et al.* investigated the prognostic significance of insulin resistance in 161 treatment-naive patients infected with HCV genotype 1, who received telaprevir followed by PEG-IFN- α and ribavirin. Insulin resistance was not found to be predictive of virologic response to telaprevir.

Original article Serfaty, L. *et al.* Insulin resistance and response to telaprevir plus peginterferon α and ribavirin in treatment-naive patients infected with HCV genotype 1. *Gut* doi:10.1136/gutjnl-2011-300749

GERD

The combination of succinic acid and omeprazole is effective at controlling intragastric pH

PPIs only bind to activated proton pumps and thus have to be taken before a meal to maximize efficacy. Succinic acid has been shown to induce gastric acid secretion, so researchers investigated the combination of omeprazole and succinic acid (VECAM) for controlling intragastric pH. 36 healthy individuals were enrolled in this open-label, randomized, crossover study that compared VECAM with omeprazole alone. VECAM was found to be significantly better than omeprazole alone at maintaining intragastric pH >4 during the night-time, and this combination could eliminate the need for a subsequent meal.

Original article Chowers, Y. *et al.* The effect of once daily omeprazole and succinic acid (VECAM) vs once daily omeprazole on 24-h intragastric pH. *Neurogastroenterol. Motil.* doi:10.1111/j.1365-2982.2012.01884.x

ULCERS

Two susceptibility loci identified for duodenal ulcers

Tanikawa *et al.* conducted a genome-wide association analysis in 7,035 individuals with duodenal ulcers and 25,323 controls from Japan. Two susceptibility loci were identified, one in the *PSCA* gene (which encodes prostate stem cell antigen) and one in the *ABO* blood group locus. *Helicobacter pylori* infection is a major cause of duodenal ulcers; these findings demonstrate that genetic variation might also have a role in their pathogenesis.

Original article Tanikawa, C. *et al.* A genome-wide association study identifies two susceptibility loci for duodenal ulcer in the Japanese population. *Nat. Genet.* doi:10.1038/ng.1109

CANCER

Cost-effectiveness of strategies to combat cancer in sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia

A mathematical modeling study published in the *BMJ* investigated the cost-effectiveness of various strategies to combat breast, cervical and colorectal cancer in sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia. With regard to colorectal cancer, increasing the coverage of treatment interventions is considered highly cost-effective in both regions. In addition, in sub-Saharan Africa, screening for colorectal cancer (by colonoscopy at age 50) is cost-effective.

Original article Ginsberg, G. M. *et al.* Cost effectiveness of strategies to combat breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer in sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia: mathematical modelling study. *BMJ* doi:10.1136/bmj.e614