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IN BRIEF

LIVER

Liver injury—age matters

Age profoundly affects the fibrogenic response to liver injury, according to findings from a mouse model. Acute liver injury was greater in old mice (18 months old) than in middle-aged mice (9 months old). The fibrogenic response to chronic liver injury was also greater in old livers when compared with middle-aged livers. A greater number of macrophages (which are thought to have a role in fibrogenesis) were found in the younger mice and livers than in the older mice and livers, suggesting that macrophage recruitment and dynamics have a role in age-related fibrotic disease.

Original article Collins, B. C. *et al.* Association of age dependent liver injury and fibrosis with immune cell populations. *Liver Int.* doi:19.1111/liv.12202

LIVER

Tolvaptan provides new hope for treating hepatic oedema

Diuretic therapy—the conventional treatment for hepatic oedema—is not always effective. A phase III trial has now shown that tolvaptan (7.5 mg daily) is effective as an add-on therapy for 7 days in the treatment of hepatic oedema associated with liver cirrhosis. Tolvaptan decreased body weight and improved lower-limb oedema and ascites-related symptoms in patients ($n = 84$) considerably more than placebo ($n = 80$). Tolvaptan also increased serum sodium concentration irrespective of the baseline level.

Original article Sakida, I. *et al.* Tolvaptan for improvement of hepatic edema: A phase 3, multicenter, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial. *Hepatol. Res.* doi:10.1111/hepr.12098

IBD

IBD in the Asia-Pacific region

Epidemiological data for IBD in the Asia-Pacific region are lacking. The Asia-Pacific Crohn's and Colitis Epidemiology Study conducted a 1-year prospective, population-based study in eight countries from Asia and in Australia. A total of 419 new cases of IBD were identified (232 ulcerative colitis, 166 Crohn's disease and 21 undetermined). IBD incidence varied throughout Asia; China had the highest incidence. Of note, although IBD incidence is lower in Asia than in the West, severity of the disease was similar.

Original article Ng, S. C. *et al.* Incidence and phenotype of inflammatory bowel disease, based on results from the Asia-Pacific Crohn's and Colitis Epidemiology Study. *Gastroenterology* doi:10.1053/j.gastro.2013.04.007

RECTAL CANCER

Chemoradiation for anal cancer: cisplatin or mitomycin?

Chemoradiation is the standard-of-care for anal cancer but, as not all patients respond to mitomycin, should mitomycin be replaced with cisplatin? In an open-label trial of 940 patients with squamous-cell carcinoma of the anus, mitomycin or cisplatin with fluorouracil and radiotherapy were both equally effective (~90% of patients had a complete response at 26 weeks). Similar levels of adverse events were reported after the two treatments. Maintenance chemotherapy gave no additional survival benefit.

Original article James, R. D. *et al.* Mitomycin or cisplatin chemoradiation with or without maintenance chemotherapy for treatment of squamous-cell carcinoma of the anus (ACT II): a randomised, phase 3, open-label, 2x2 factorial trial. *Lancet* doi:10.1016/S1470-2045(13)70086-X