

Hepatitis B does not increase risk for pancreatic cancer

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A Henry Ford Hospital study found that hepatitis B does not increase the risk for pancreatic cancer - and that only age is a contributing factor.

The results contradict a previous study in 2008 that suggested a link between [pancreatic cancer](#) and previous [hepatitis B](#) infection. Hepatitis B is an inflammation of the liver caused by a viral infection.

Study results will be presented at the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases' Annual Meeting in Boston.

Using data from Henry Ford Health System, physicians looked at more than 74,000 patients who were tested for hepatitis B between 1995 and 2008. In the overall analysis, only age was found to be a significant predictor for pancreatic cancer.

"We looked at the incidence of pancreatic cancer among hepatitis B-infected patients over a 13-year period and found that we could not confirm a higher risk for those with a previous exposure to hepatitis B, as a prior study suggested," says Jeffrey Tang, M.D., gastroenterologist at Henry Ford Hospital and lead author of the study.

"When other factors are considered - such as age, race, sex, HIV status, and the presence of diabetes - only older age and presence of diabetes proved significant, whereas prior exposure to hepatitis B was no longer an important variable."

According to the National Cancer Institute, more than 35,000 people in the U.S. die of pancreatic cancer each year and 42,000 new cases are diagnosed. The survival rates for patients with pancreatic cancer are poor.

An estimated 800,000 to 1.4 million people have chronic hepatitis B infection, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In 2007, an estimated 43,000 people in the United States were newly infected with hepatitis B, although many cases are not reported because many people do not have symptoms.

Source: Henry Ford Health System ([news](#) : [web](#))

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