

New compounds show promise against hepatitis C infection

April 12 2011

Two bioflavonoids, catechin and naringenin, have displayed antiviral activity on tissue culture infected with Hepatitis C.

Approximately 270-300 million people worldwide are infected with [hepatitis C](#), and about 1%-2% of the U.S. population is infected. This infectious disease can lead to scarring of the liver, cirrhosis, and eventually [liver failure](#). A significant number of infected patients develop [liver disease](#) or cancer. The current standard treatment is interferon, which has only a 50% success rate. Compounding the 50% failure rate are severe side effects which lead many people to discontinue treatment.

Dr. Samuel Wheeler French Jr., MD, PhD, Assistant Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at UCLA and researcher at UCLA's Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center, is a liver pathologist who is currently developing a proteomic-based program to study the development of [liver cancer](#) from hepatitis C viral infection. His most recent study results, to be presented in an American Society for Investigative Pathology (ASIP) symposium on "Pathobiology of Liver Injury and Fibrosis" on Tuesday afternoon, April 12 at Experimental Biology 2011, evaluate the effects of several flavonoids on hepatitis C viral infection. Previously, Dr. French has shown that quercetin, a plant-derived bioflavonoid used by some as a nutritional supplement, attenuates [Hepatitis C virus](#) production with no cell toxicity. In his most recent research, French and colleagues found that two other bioflavonoids, catechin and naringenin, displayed antiviral activity on

tissue culture. The next step is to determine through a Phase I Clinical Trial that they are safe for patients with chronic hepatitis C infection.

"We now have several new compounds we can test to see if they reduce virus infection," said Dr. French. "The positive thing about this family of compounds is that they are nontoxic, and can be taken at high doses. Bioflavonoids represent a very promising therapy with very few side effects that could help millions of people."

Provided by Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

Citation: New compounds show promise against hepatitis C infection (2011, April 12) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-04-compounds-hepatitis-infection.html>

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