

University launches iphone app for hepatitis treatment

November 22 2011

The University of Liverpool has launched an iphone app, HEP i-chart, that provides Hepatitis C (HCV) patients with quick and easy access to the latest information about drug interactions.

Hepatitis C was first discovered in the 1980s when it became apparent that there was a [new virus](#) (not the already known hepatitis A or B) causing [liver damage](#). Hepatitis C causes [inflammation](#) and swelling of the liver. It is estimated that over 170million individuals – representing 3% of the world's population – are chronically infected with the Hepatitis C virus (HCV). Statistically, as many people are infected with HCV as are with HIV.

Since its identification, drug treatment to eradicate the virus has advanced greatly, especially in the last few years. Two new drugs have recently been licensed for treatment of HCV, and there are more drugs in development.

HEP i-chart is based on the website (<http://www.hep-druginteractions.org/>) developed at the University by Professor David Back and Professor Saye Khoo which provides a comprehensive online guide to the interactions between anti-hepatitis drugs and other drugs. It is a tool that provides Hepatitis C patients and healthcare professionals with immediate access to up-to-date information on potential drug interactions between HCV drugs, and other drugs that the patient may be prescribed as well as over-the-counter, recreational or herbal medications.

Existing HCV drugs, newly licensed drugs and drugs in development can have interactions with each other and with other drugs which can impact on their effectiveness – sometimes with serious consequences. For this reason, some drug combinations must not be used, whilst others must be given with caution, possibly requiring adjustment or monitoring.

Professor of Pharmacology, David Back, said: "We are delighted to launch with our partners – KnowledgePoint360, MSD and Janssen- this new i-phone application that provides [Hepatitis C](#) patients and healthcare professionals with instant and easy access to information about HCV drug interactions which is relevant and reliable and up-to-date. This resource is especially important as new HCV drug treatments are approved and come into use."

Professor Graham Foster, President of the British Association for the Study of the Liver (BASL) said: "This new app, HEP i-chart, is a timely and much-needed resource for [HCV patients](#) as the number of new drugs which are available to treat [Hepatitis C](#) increases."

Provided by University of Liverpool

Citation: University launches iphone app for hepatitis treatment (2011, November 22) retrieved 10 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-11-university-iphone-app-hepatitis-treatment.html>

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