

Statin use linked to reduced risk of hepatocellular cancer

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(HealthDay)—Statin use is associated with a reduced risk of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), most strongly in Asian populations, according to a meta-analysis published in the February issue of *Gastroenterology*.

Siddharth Singh, M.B.B.S., from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., and colleagues conducted a systematic literature review and meta-analysis of studies that evaluated the effects of statins on the risk of HCC. The analysis included 10 studies reporting 4,298 cases of HCC in 1,459,417 patients.

The researchers found that, compared with statin nonusers, statin users

were significantly less likely to develop HCC (adjusted odds ratio [aOR], 0.63), although there was considerable heterogeneity in the results ($P = 0.01$; $I^2 = 59$ percent). Suggested sources of this heterogeneity included study location (Asian population [four studies]: aOR, 0.52; Western population [six studies]: aOR, 0.67) and study design ([observational studies](#) [seven studies]: aOR, 0.60; clinical trials [three studies]: aOR, 0.95; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.62 to 1.45).

"In summary, our meta-analysis suggests that use of statins is associated with a reduced risk of HCC," the authors write. "However, these results should be interpreted with caution given the possibility of residual confounding. Future randomized clinical trials or prospective cohort studies in populations at high risk for HCC (especially in the [Asian hepatitis B virus](#)-infected population) are warranted."

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