# Hepatitis C screening essential to help catch patients with advanced liver fibrosis

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Study results presented today at The International Liver Congress 2015 show that the occurrence of advanced liver fibrosis is similar for patients infected with the hepatitis C virus (HCV), whether or not they have been diagnosed.

Most individuals with HCV remain asymptomatic, which makes the diagnosis difficult. The study authors used the hypothesis that individuals whose HCV is not diagnosed are less likely to have advanced fibrosis than those who have been diagnosed. They then compared liver fibrosis between respondents of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) in the USA, in patients with diagnosed and undiagnosed HCV infection.

Of the respondents with known HCV infection, the proportion with a high, intermediate and low probability of advanced fibrosis was 14.5%, 40.3%, 45.2%, respectively; in those with undiagnosed HCV the results were 19.1%, 30.9%, 50.0%, respectively.

The study highlights that even if people are unaware they are infected with HCV, the virus affects their liver in the same way, resulting in advanced fibrosis. These results validate the current recommendation that screening for HCV, particularly among high-risk groups, is vital.

  **More information:** ADVANCED FIBROSIS IS COMMON IN INDIVIDUALS WHOSE HEPATITIS C HAS NOT BEEN DIAGNOSED: RESULTS FROM THE NATIONAL HEALTH AND

NUTRITION EXAMINATION SURVEY 2001-2012, The International Liver Congress 2015.

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