New treatment may help neonatal liver disease associated with parenteral nutrition

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A new study finds that exogenous glucagon-like peptide 2 (GLP-2) treatment may help fight neonatal parenteral nutrition-associated liver disease (PNALD).

The study, published today in the OnlineFirst version of the *Journal of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition* (*JPEN*), the research journal of the American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (A.S.P.E.N.), provided neonatal piglets with 17 days of parenteral nutrition therapy and either GLP-2 treatment or saline control. In a previous study, the researchers found that GLP-2 therapy improved bile flow and serum markers of cholestasis.

In this follow-up study, the authors found that GLP-2 treatment was associated with alterations in bile acid profiles and the hepatic expression of genes involved in bile acid metabolism, which may be beneficial for PNALD. The data suggest that GLP-2 improves the excretion of toxic bile acids while stimulating liver growth, perhaps via the synthesis of more hepatoprotective bile acids. These findings support a beneficial role for GLP-2 as a novel therapy in PNALD.

This novel research was performed at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada. It earned Dr. David W. Lim, first author on the research article, the 2015 A.S.P.E.N. Harry M. Vars Award, the A.S.P.E.N. Research Trainee Award, and the A.S.P.E.N. New Practitioner Award.

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