

Burden, costs of gastrointestinal, liver disease estimated in US

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(HealthDay)—In the United States, the burden and associated costs of gastrointestinal (GI), liver, and pancreatic diseases are substantial, according to a report published in the December issue of *Gastroenterology*.

Anne F. Peery, M.D., from the University of North Carolina School of Medicine at Chapel Hill, and colleagues used data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the National Cancer Institute to estimate the burden and costs of GI and liver disease.

The researchers found that in a year there were seven million diagnoses of gastroesophageal reflux and almost four million diagnoses of hemorrhoids in the ambulatory setting. In 2012, functional and motility

disorders resulted in nearly one million emergency department visits, mostly for constipation. The most common diagnosis leading to hospitalization was GI hemorrhage, with more than 500,000 discharges in 2012, at a cost of nearly \$5 billion. During the last 20 years there were increases in hospitalizations and associated costs for inflammatory bowel disease, *Clostridium difficile* infection, and chronic [liver disease](#). More than one million people were identified in the United States with colorectal cancer in 2011. Colorectal cancer was the leading GI cause of death, followed by pancreatic and hepatobiliary neoplasms.

"These diseases account for substantial utilization of health care resources and costs in the United States," the authors write.

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