

Can aspirin stop liver cancer in hepatitis B patients?

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(HealthDay)—Daily aspirin may reduce the risk of liver cancer for

people with hepatitis B infection, a new study suggests.

Hepatitis B virus attacks the [liver](#) and can cause cirrhosis and liver cancer. Previous research suggests daily low-dose aspirin therapy may prevent cancer, but there is little clinical evidence on whether regular aspirin use can prevent liver cancer in people with hepatitis B.

Researchers from Taiwan analyzed data from close to 205,000 patients with chronic hepatitis B. They found that those on daily aspirin were much less likely to develop liver cancer over five years than those who did not take aspirin.

It's important to note, however, that the study only found these associations, but did not establish a cause-and-effect link.

The findings are scheduled to be presented Monday at an American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases meeting, in Washington, D.C.

About 240 million people worldwide have chronic hepatitis B, according to the association.

While antiviral medicines can significantly reduce liver [cancer](#) risk in people with the hepatitis B virus (HBV), they don't eliminate it and are not appropriate for everyone, said lead investigator Dr. Teng-Yu Lee.

Lee is a researcher in the department of gastroenterology at Taichung Veterans General Hospital.

"For effectively preventing HBV-related [liver cancer](#), the findings of this study may help hepatologists treat patients with chronic HBV infection in the future, particularly for those who are not indicated for antiviral therapy. We are pursuing prospective investigations for further

confirming the findings," Lee said in a meeting news release.

Research presented at medical meetings is typically considered preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed journal.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [hepatitis B](#).

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