

Antiretroviral HIV medication attenuates liver fibrosis

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Rilpivirine research group. Credit: Valencia University

Scientists from Valencia University (UV) have discovered that Rilpivirine, an antiretroviral drug used for treating HIV, has beneficial effects on chronic liver diseases. The finding opens a path to identify

new therapies for liver diseases. Their work has been published in the journal *Gut*.

Liver fibrosis is a significant health issue worldwide due to its growing prevalence and the lack of effective therapeutic options.

Recently, researchers from the UV and the CIBERehd (Biomedical Research Centre Network—Hepatic and Digestive Diseases) have revealed that antiretroviral medicine Rilpivirine (RPV), which is already sold and used for treating HIV infections, can decrease [liver fibrosis](#) in different preclinical models of hepatic damage.

The results obtained and published in *Gut* highlight the need to find selective therapies to efficiently treat patients with fibrosis, acting on the inactivation of stellate cells and the regeneration of liver tissue.

The study reveals that RPV prevents the accumulation of lipids and has anti-inflammatory and anti-fibrotic effects on preclinical models of chronic liver disease, regardless of their aetiology, which is of great clinical significance because hepatic fibrosis is a common factor in all [chronic liver diseases](#).

The protective effect of this drug has been confirmed in a retrospective study analyzing the clinical data from published databases on patients infected by HIV and treated with different antiretroviral regimens, which shows that patients treated with this medicine show an improved liver function.

More information: Alberto Martí-Rodrigo et al. Rilpivirine attenuates liver fibrosis through selective STAT1-mediated apoptosis in hepatic stellate cells, *Gut* (2019). [DOI: 10.1136/gutjnl-2019-318372](https://doi.org/10.1136/gutjnl-2019-318372)

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