

Update on new treatments for liver diseases

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Cirrhosis and nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) are two serious liver conditions with limited pharmacological treatments. The December issues of AGA's journals—*Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology* and *Gastroenterology*—highlight important updates into treatments for these two debilitating diseases.

Promising Probiotic for Liver Disease

A study published in [Gastroenterology](#)¹ found that, over a six-month period, daily intake of the probiotic VSL#3® significantly improved [liver function](#) and reduced the risk of hospitalization in patients with cirrhosis. Patients who received the probiotic also had a reduction in the development of hepatic encephalopathy, the worsening of brain function that occurs when the liver is no longer able to remove toxic substances in the blood. There were no adverse events related to VSL#3.

The authors have no conflicts to disclose.

Drug Reduces Liver Fat Content in NAFLD Patients

Publishing in [Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology](#)², researchers report that three months' administration of the fatty acid/bile acid conjugate Aramchol is safe, tolerable and significantly reduces liver fat content in patients with NAFLD. The reduction in liver fat content occurred in a dose-dependent manner and was associated with a trend of metabolic improvements, indicating that Aramchol is a candidate for the treatment of fatty liver-related diseases, currently an unmet need.

This research was supported by Galmed Medical Research, Ltd.

Resveratrol Does Not Benefit Patients with NAFLD

Reporting in [*Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology*](#)³, researchers find that eight weeks administration of resveratrol did not induce therapeutic benefits in men with established NAFLD, compared with placebo. Caution is warranted for use in obesity with chronic [liver disease](#) until further research determines safety.

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More information: 1 Dhiman, Radha K. et al., Probiotic VSL#3 Reduces Liver Disease Severity and Hospitalization in Patients With Cirrhosis: A Randomized, Controlled Trial, *Gastroenterology*, 147(6): 1327-1337.e3

2 Safadi, Rifaat, et al., The Fatty Acid-Bile Acid Conjugate Aramchol Reduces Liver Fat Content in Patients With Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease, *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology*, 12(12): 2085-2091.e1

3 Chachay, Veronique S., et al., Resveratrol Does Not Benefit Patients With Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease, *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology*, 12(12): 2092-2103.e6

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