

Japan connects hepatitis C treatment with reduction in liver cancer progression

25 November 2021 | News

Study showed that eliminating the hepatitis C virus with direct-acting antivirals suppresses tumour progression



In a new cohort study of patients with hepatitis C virus (HCV)-related hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), a disease with a high recurrence rate, researchers at the Osaka City University Graduate School of Medicine in Japan reported that after receiving cancer treatment, the oral administration of direct-acting antivirals (DAA) reduces the risk of tumor progression following recurrence of the liver disease.

“While it is deemed low or inconclusive whether DAA therapy helps prevent HCC recurrence, little is known about how the antiviral therapy affects progression of the liver disease after cancer treatment”, said the researchers.

HCV infection affects 71 million people worldwide and accounts for about 65% of the causes of liver cancer in Japan. While the team will continue to investigate issues like the extent to which liver cirrhosis and function improve after the antiviral treatment, as supporting author and Lecturer Sawako Uchida-Kobayashi puts it, “the suppressing effect of DAA therapy on cancer progression revealed by our study gives us hope to improve the overall quality of life for people with HCC.”