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Korea offers new breakthrough for hepatitis C to improve life expectancy

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Treatment with direct-acting antivirals improve liver-related clinical outcomes and reduce liver fibrosis in patients with Hepatitis C virus infection



Hepatitis C viral (HCV) infection is the underlying cause for chronic Hepatitis C (CHC), liver cirrhosis, and liver cancer or hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC). In 2019, over 2,90,000 people died of HCV-related diseases.

Recent medical advancement made a new breakthrough treatment available for patients with hepatitis C. Direct acting antiviral agents (DAAs) that block replication of HCV has dramatically transformed the treatment approach with around 90% effective anti-viral response rates. However, it is unclear whether DAAs impact the severity of disease burden caused by liver fibrosis.

To answer this critical question, Associate Professor Seungbong Han from the Department of Biostatistics, Korea University College of Medicine, South Korea collaborated with his colleagues across multiple centres in South Korea to evaluate the impact of DAAs on the fibrotic disease burden in patients with chronic HCV infection.

"Our study can help improve public health, healthcare systems, and individual lives by encouraging the development of early intervention and effective treatment strategies for HCV infection," said Associate Prof. Han.

Sustainability in healthcare requires evidence-based allocation of healthcare resources. The findings from this study merits public health campaigns raising awareness about Hepatitis C and its risks that will promote nationwide screening for HCV positivity. Early intervention with advanced antiviral approaches is likely to decrease healthcare costs associated with treating advanced liver diseases like cancer or cirrhosis, freeing up resources for other critical healthcare needs.