

LIVER CANCER CAN'T WAIT

**Saving lives from
liver cancer by
eliminating hepatitis**

Viral hepatitis infection is the most common risk factor for liver cancer.¹ Chronic viral hepatitis can lead to hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC),² which accounts for 80% of all liver cancer cases³ and is the third most common cause of cancer deaths worldwide.⁴ Despite this, nearly half (42%) of people globally are not aware that one of the leading causes of liver cancer is viral hepatitis – according to research by the World Hepatitis Alliance.



THE FACTS

Chronic hepatitis
B leads to at least

54%

of all liver
cancer cases⁵

People living with
chronic hepatitis B are

**100
times**

more likely to develop
liver cancer than
uninfected people⁵

People diagnosed
with chronic
hepatitis B have a
25% to 40%
risk of developing
liver cancer during
their lifetimes⁶

People living with
hepatitis D are
at greater risk
of developing HCC
than those only living
with hepatitis B⁷

In the next
10 to 20 years,
the number of liver
cancer cases related to
hepatitis C is predicted
to continue increase and
**potentially
double**¹⁰

People living
with hepatitis C have a
34%
greater risk
of developing HCC than those
uninfected⁸ – some people
are still at risk of developing
HCC even if they have been
cured of hepatitis C⁹

Did you know?











Hepatitis B is a virus that causes liver cancer at the same rate as someone who actively smokes one pack of cigarette per day.¹¹



The global burden of viral hepatitis and liver cancer:

Africa and Asia are disproportionately impacted by viral hepatitis, which has led to both regions also being heavily burdened by liver cancer.

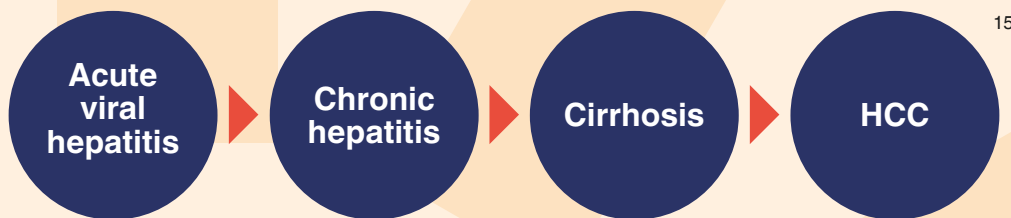
The top 10 countries impacted by liver cancer are all in Africa and Asia, with 72% of the total HCC deaths globally attributed to Asia Pacific alone.¹²

Top 10 countries with the highest incidence of liver cancer ¹³		
Global ranking	Country	Rate of liver cancer per 100,000 population
1	 Mongolia	85.6
2	Egypt 	34.1
3	 Laos	24.4
4	Cambodia 	24.3
5	 Vietnam	23.0
6	Thailand 	22.6
7	 Guinea	21.8
8	China 	18.2
9	 Gambia	17.2
10	Ghana 	16.9

Chronic hepatitis C is the primary cause of liver cancer in North America, Europe and Japan, while chronic hepatitis B is the leading cause in Africa and Asia.¹²

How hepatitis elimination also stops cancer

More than half of all liver cancer cases are caused by chronic hepatitis infection, but these cases are preventable.¹⁰ Chronic hepatitis repeatedly attacks the liver, over time, this can lead to liver damage and cirrhosis,¹⁰ which is the primary risk factor of HCC.¹⁴



- **Increased vaccination**, screening and treatment for hepatitis B can prevent the disease from progressing to liver cancer.¹⁶
- **Hepatitis C treatment** prevents long-term liver damage, reducing the risk of developing liver cancer by 75%.⁶
- **Ongoing monitoring** of people living with viral hepatitis for HCC and other liver diseases can lead to early detection and treatment.^{17, 18}

Did you know?

The hepatitis B vaccine was the first vaccination to prevent cancer.¹⁹

Hepatitis vaccination reduces the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs)

In 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO) expanded their “NCD best buys” to include hepatitis B vaccination to prevent liver cancer. The NCD best buys set out cost-effective policy solutions for countries to manage NCDs.²⁰ Hepatitis B vaccination for liver cancer prevention is a ‘best buy’ and it is important that both the hepatitis and cancer communities ensure governments are actioning this as part of their cancer prevention strategies.

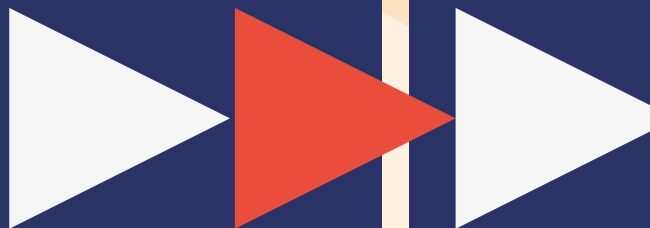
Calls to action

- The hepatitis and the cancer communities must come together to raise their collective voice to increase awareness of liver cancer's connection to viral hepatitis and call for greater action.
- Hepatitis vaccination, testing, treatment and care should be integrated into national cancer prevention and control strategies and programmes.
- Countries must invest now in hepatitis services to reduce the burden of NCDs.
- People living with viral hepatitis must have access to affordable and accessible treatment and ongoing monitoring for HCC and other liver diseases.



For more details on the connection
between viral hepatitis and liver cancer,
please contact us at

contact@worldhepatitisalliance.org



Endnotes

- 1 American Cancer Society. Liver Cancer Risk Factors [Internet]. 2019 [Accessed 13 July 2023]. Available from: <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/liver-cancer/causes-risks-prevention/risk-factors.html#:~:text=Worldwide%2C%20the%20most%20common%20risk,many%20parts%20of%20the%20world.>
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- 5 Hepatitis B Foundation. Risk Factors [Internet]. [Accessed on 13 July 2023]. Available from: <https://www.hepb.org/research-and-programs/liver/risk-factors-for-liver-cancer/>
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- 13 World Cancer Research Fund International. Liver cancer statistics [Internet]. 2022 [Accessed 19 July 2023]. Available from: <https://www.wcrf.org/cancer-trends/liver-cancer-statistics/>
- 14 Bengtsson, B, Widman, L, Wahlin, S, Stål, P, Björkström, NK, Hagström, H. The risk of hepatocellular carcinoma in cirrhosis differs by etiology, age and sex: a Swedish nationwide population-based cohort study [Internet]. 2022 [Accessed 13 July 2023]. Available from: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/ueg2.12238#:~:text=Liver%20cirrhosis%20is%20the%20major,individuals%20with%20HCC%20have%20cirrhosis.>
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