

CANADIAN ETHNOCULTURAL COUNCIL PROJECT

**Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, and  
Human Immunodeficiency Virus  
in High-Risk Immigrant Ethnic Communities**

*in partnership with*

CANADIAN  
LIVER  
FOUNDATION



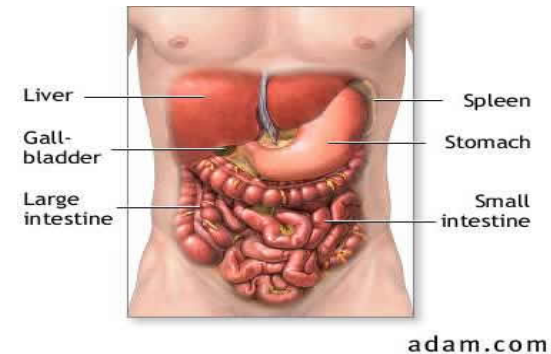
FONDATION  
CANADIENNE  
DU FOIE

**2014**

PROJECT FUNDED BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA

## What Does Your Liver Do?

- Filter: cleanses the blood of toxins
- Processor of nutrients
- Produces bile (aids in fat digestion)
- Manufactures body proteins  
(albumin, clotting factors)
- Regulates the balance of hormones
- Regulates cholesterol
- Regulates sugar
- Regulates the supply of vitamins and minerals



# Healthy Liver



# Cirrhosis



**Fig. 19.4.** The small finely-nodular liver of micronodular cirrhosis.

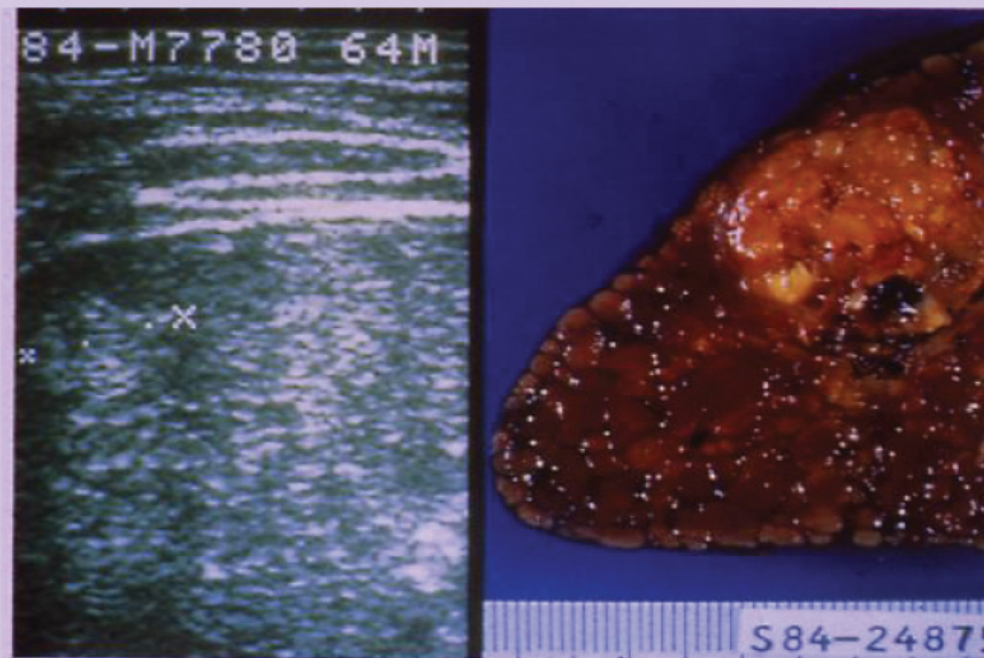
# Cirrhosis



**Fig. 19.6.** The grossly distorted coarsely nodular liver of macronodular cirrhosis.



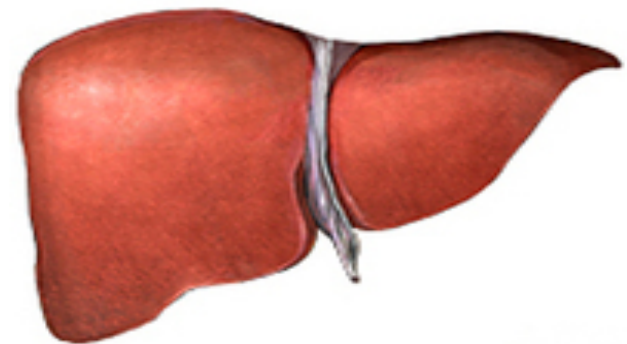
# Liver Cancer



**Fig. 28.8.** Ultrasound shows a small hepato-cellular carcinoma (marked xx). This was surgically resected and the specimen is shown (courtesy J F Liaw).

## What Causes Liver Disease?

- Lifestyle – Obesity
- Viruses – hepatitis A, B, C
- Alcohol
- Genetics
- Overactive immune system
- Cancer



ADAM

## **What is Hepatitis?**

**Inflammation of the liver, caused by:**

- **Obesity – NASH**
- **Viruses – viral hepatitis**
- **Alcohol – ASH**
- **Immune System – autoimmune hepatitis**
- **Medications – drug-induced hepatitis**



## What is Viral Hepatitis?

An inflammation of the liver caused by viruses:

Hepatitis A

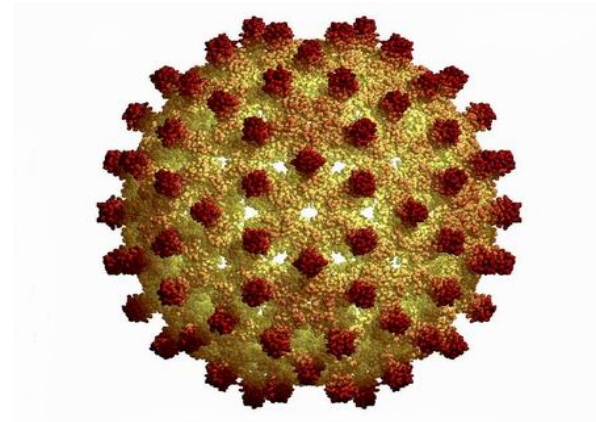
Hepatitis B

Hepatitis C

Hepatitis D

Hepatitis E

Hepatitis G



## **Hepatitis A**

- Spread through contaminated food and water.
- Most people recover 100% and develop lifelong immunity.
- Vaccines can prevent hepatitis A.

## Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, and HIV

- Hepatitis C - a major public health concern in certain immigrant ethnic communities in Canada.
- These communities are at high risk for hepatitis B and HIV.
- These infections are **preventable and treatable**.
- They continue to spread because people do not know
  - how they are spread and how to prevent the spread
  - how to get tested or seek treatment.
- **Illegal** in Canada to treat a person differently because of illness.

## Hepatitis C

- A liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus.
- 25% clear the virus; in 75% it becomes chronic.
- Chronic hepatitis can lead to cirrhosis (scarring) of liver and/or liver cancer.
- Anyone born between 1945 and 1975 is at **risk**.
- Virus spread through blood-to-blood contact with an infected person.
- Diagnosis by a **blood test**.
- Can be **treated** and **cured**.
- Currently **no vaccine**, but preventable.



## Hepatitis B

- A liver disease caused by the hepatitis B virus.
- 90% of adults clear the virus; only about 5-10% become chronically infected.
- If exposed to the hepatitis B virus, 90% of infants become chronically infected.
- Chronic hepatitis B can lead to cirrhosis of the liver and/or liver cancer.
- Treatments for chronic hepatitis B are available. There is no cure for chronic hepatitis B.
- **Vaccines are available** to prevent hepatitis B.

## HIV

- Virus affects immune system and weakens ability to fight infections.
- Most advanced stage - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

*HIV is spread through contact with the blood, breast milk, semen or vaginal secretions of an infected person.*

- Diagnosis by **blood test**.
- **No cure** – effective treatment available.
- Without treatment, severe illnesses (e.g. tuberculosis) can develop.
- Currently **no vaccine** but prevented easily.



## Chinese Community: Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, and HIV

*According to Statistics Canada in 2011, 1.5 million people reported being of Chinese origin.*

- About 3% in China are infected with **HCV** (40 million).
- Third-highest rate of chronic hepatitis C infection in the world.
- **Hepatitis B** affects 8 to 10% of adult population (up to 93 million).
- One-third of people in the world who are chronically infected live in China.
- About one million people living with **HIV**.
- Overall prevalence of **HIV** is low, but minor increases in infection rates in a country of one billion signify that large numbers of people are newly infected (48,000 in 2011).

## **Egyptian Community: Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, and HIV**

*According to Statistics Canada in 2011, 73,250 people reported being of Egyptian origin.*

- World's highest prevalence rate of **hepatitis C**.
- Overall prevalence rate is 22% (17.8 million).
- High prevalence mainly due to past and current use of unsterilized needles in medical and dental procedures.
  
- **Hepatitis B** affects about 10% of people (8.1 million).
- Infection rates higher among young adults and in males.
  
- The number of **HIV** cases remains low – around 11,000.
- Has one of the world's highest increases in the number of cases.

## Filipino Community: Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, and HIV

*According to Statistics Canada in 2011, 662,600 people reported being of Filipino origin.*

- **Hepatitis C** is a major public health issue in the Philippines.
- About 3 million people living with hepatitis C (3.6% of people).
- 16 million Filipinos chronically infected with **hepatitis B** virus (16.5% of the population).
- The Philippines has a low prevalence rate of **HIV** (Less than 0.1% of the population or 10,514 total cases).
- HIV cases in the Philippines increased by more than 25% from 2001 to 2009.

## Indian Community: Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, and HIV

*According to Statistics Canada in 2011, 1,615,925 people reported being of South Asian origin (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal). 32,747 people emigrated from India in 2012.*

- About 1.5% of people are living with **hepatitis C** (18.6 million).
- The rate of **hepatitis B** infection in India is between 2 - 10% (123.7 million).
- More than 4% of babies born in India every year are at risk of developing chronic hepatitis B.
- Overall prevalence of **HIV** is low, but minor increases in infection rates in a country of one billion signify that large numbers of people are newly infected.
- Between 1.9 and 3.0 million people living with HIV (Government of India).

## Vietnamese Community: Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, and HIV

*According to Statistics Canada in 2011, 220,425 people reported being of Vietnamese origin.*

- About 4 to 5% of people in Vietnam infected with **hepatitis C** (4.4 million); of these, 3.5 million have chronic hepatitis C.
- Vietnamese men have the highest rate of liver cancer in the world.
- Vietnam is among the countries with the highest rate of **hepatitis B** infection in the world.
- About 10 to 20% of population infected with the virus (18 million).
- In 2012, there were 208,866 people with **HIV** and another 59,839 with full-blown AIDS.
- HIV is concentrated in higher-risk populations (injection drug users, female sex workers, and men who have sex with men).

## Where to go for information?

### *From Training Manual:*

- List of health services in the city
- Canadian Liver Foundation
- Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE)
- Public health departments
- Support lines or toll-free telephone lines
- Useful publications and websites



**Getting tested is the only way to know your status.  
There are effective treatments, and they work  
best when started early.**

(All images are courtesy of Canadian Liver Foundation)

**Thank you**