A Practical Approach to Managing Patients with HCV Infection

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Abstract:

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is a major worldwide public health concern. It is a common cause of chronic liver disease and hepatocellular carcinoma. HCV antibody and HCV RNA testing are available diagnostic studies that offer high degree of accuracy. Current standard therapy includes a combination of pegylated interferon and ribavirin. Response rate is approximately 40% for genotype 1 and 80% for genotypes 2 and 3, respectively. Successful treatment can stop the progression of chronic liver disease, reduce the need for liver transplantation, and possibly decrease the risk for Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC). Evaluating for potential treatment candidacy is an important initial step in the management of chronic HCV infection as not all individuals may need or qualify for the treatment. Understanding the natural history, the different diagnostic modalities, the current therapeutic options and, the treatment response and adverse effect profiles can help the practitioners better manage chronic HCV infection.

Key Word:
Chronic Hepatitis C, treatment, interferon, PEG-interferon, ribavirin

Volume 3, Number 2, - 2006, ISSN 1449-1907