Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Infection and Hepatic Steatosis

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Abstract:

There are two discrete forms of steatosis that may be found in patients infected with hepatitis C virus (HCV). Metabolic steatosis can coexist with HCV, regardless of genotype, in patients with risk factors such as obesity, hyperlipidemia, and insulin resistance. The second form of hepatic steatosis in HCV patients is a result of the direct cytopathic effect of genotype 3 viral infections. There have been proposed mechanisms for this process but it remains elusive. Both categories of steatosis tend to hasten the progression of liver fibrosis and therefore prompt recognition and management should be initiated in patients with HCV and steatosis. The authors review the current understanding of the relationship between hepatitis C infection and hepatic steatosis and discuss future research directions.

Key Word:
hepatitis C, obesity, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, steatosis, NAFLD, NASH