

Infographic Liver Tumours

Liver cancer is a global health burden with an estimated 905 677 new cases in 2020¹, it is the sixth most common cancer and the third leading cause of cancer death¹.

Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) is the most common liver malignancy accounting for ~90% of all liver cancers. This type of cancer affects hepatocytes, the most abundant cells in the liver². Intrahepatic cholangiocarcinoma, is the second type of liver cancer (10–15% of cases) affecting cholangiocytes; the cells that line the small bile ducts within the liver⁴. Hemangioendothelioma and hepatic angiosarcoma are less common and affect the cells lining blood vessels within the liver^{5,6}. Finally, Hepatoblastoma is a rare liver cancer that affects young children before they turn 5 years old.

Causes of liver cancer vary depending on the geographical locations, with viral hepatitis being the major cause².

The primary risk factors for liver cancer are viral hepatitis², (Hepatitis B and C), fatty liver disease (NAFLD), alcohol consumption, metabolic diseases, environmental toxins, bile duct disease and genetic haemochromatosis². Strong evidence suggests that NAFLD and obesity are increasingly important risk factors for HCC due to their prevalence³.

People with cirrhosis are at higher risk to develop liver cancer, up to 1/3 will develop HCC during their lifetime and 90% of HCC cases in Western countries have a cirrhotic background. Preventive measures include reducing alcohol intake, vaccination against hepatitis B virus, detection and treatment of chronic hepatitis as well as keeping a healthy lifestyle to reduce obesity².

Over the last years, many treatment options have been developed depending on the stage of the disease such as resection, liver transplantation, local ablation, loco-regional therapy, systemic treatments and immunotherapy^{2,8}.

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