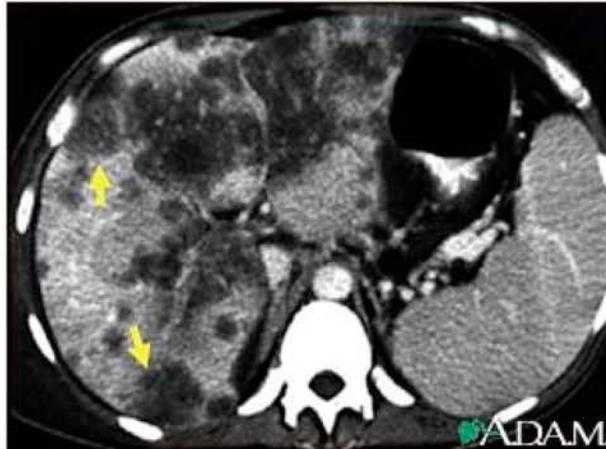


Liver Cancer

Hepatocellular cancer, CT scan



A CT scan of the upper abdomen showing an widespread (disseminated) carcinoma of the liver (hepatocellular carcinoma). The liver is the large organ on the left side of the picture. Note the moth-eaten appearance.

Causes, incidence, and risk factors [Return to top](#)

Hepatocellular carcinoma accounts for 80% to 90% of all liver cancers. It occurs more often in men than women and occurs mostly in people 50 to 60 years old. The disease is more common in parts of Africa and Asia than in North and South America and Europe.

The cause of liver cancer is unknown, but contributing factors include [chronic liver disease](#), viral [hepatitis](#) (especially hepatitis B and C), [hemochromatosis](#), known [hepatic](#) (liver) carcinogens, and [toxins](#) (mycotoxins) found in foods in parts of Africa and Asia. The [incidence](#) is about 4 in 10,000 people.

Symptoms [Return to top](#)

- [Abdominal pain](#) or tenderness, particularly in the right-upper quadrant
- Enlarged abdomen
- Easy bruising or bleeding
- [Jaundice](#) (a yellow discoloration of the skin and eyes)

Signs and tests [Return to top](#)

- [Physical examination](#) shows an enlarged, tender liver.
- A [liver biopsy](#) shows hepatocellular carcinoma.
- [Serum alpha fetoprotein](#) is elevated.
- There may be a mass shown on [abdominal CT scan](#).
- A [liver scan](#) may indicate an abnormality.
- Liver enzymes ([liver function tests](#)) are elevated.

Hepatocellular carcinoma may also alter the following test results:

- [Porphyrins; urine](#)
- [PBG](#)
- [Bilirubin; urine](#)
- [AST](#)
- [ALT](#)
- [Alpha-1 antitrypsin](#)

Treatment [Return to top](#)

Aggressive surgery or liver transplantation may be successful in treating small or slow-growing tumors if they are diagnosed early.

Chemotherapy and radiation treatments are not usually effective but may be used to shrink large tumors so that surgery has a greater chance of success.

Expectations (prognosis) [Return to top](#)

The usual outcome is poor, because only 10% to 20% of hepatocellular carcinomas can be removed completely using surgery. If the cancer cannot be completely removed, the disease is usually fatal within 3 to 6 months.

Complications [Return to top](#)

- Gastrointestinal bleeding
- Liver failure
- Spread ([metastasis](#)) of the [carcinoma](#)

TCM's Evaluation of Healing Effect on Such Disease.

Many liver cancers are successfully treated by TCM's treatment, it is effective for anti-cancer and alleviation of symptoms is possible. However, the acupuncture may release the some symptoms and pain.

TCM Treatment approach:

(The following can use Click to get detail information)

1. Herbal medicine/Formula
2. Acupuncture and Moxibustion
3. Qigong and other therapies
4. Medicated diet
5. Life style

Differentiation of common syndromes:

Total Syndromes:

- (1) Stagnation of vital energy and blood stasis
- (2) Obstruction of Damp-heat and blood stasis
- (3) Deficiency of Liver-yin and Kidney-yin

1. Stagnation of vital energy and blood stasis

Symptoms include pain in the right upper abdomen or right ribs, distension of the abdomen, anorexia, dim complexion, lassitude or fatigue, deep purple tongue with ecchymosed, taut or uneven pulse.

Herbal medicine treatment

Therapeutic principle: Promoting the flow of qi and blood, Removing blood stasis and anti-cancer.

Recipe: Modified prescriptions of decoction of Four Ingredients with Peach Kernel and Safflower.

Scutellaria barbata (ban zhi lian), Rhizome smilacis glabrae (Tu fu ling), at 15 g each; Red sage root (dan shen) 30 g; Chinese angelica (dang gui), Chuanxiong rhizome (Chuan xiong), Red peony root (chi shao), Safflower (hong hua), Peach Kernel (tao ren), Curcuma root (yu jin), Bupleurum root (chai hu), Licorice root (gan cao) at 10 g each.

Acupuncture and Moxibustion

Therapeutic principle: Promoting the flow of qi and blood, Removing blood stasis and anti-cancer.

Prescription: quchi (LI11), Nei guan (PC6), Ganshu (BL18), Zushanli (ST 36), shanyinjiao (SP6), zhongwan (RN12), Tianshu (ST25).

2. Obstruction of Damp-heat and blood stasis

Pain in the right upper abdomen or right ribs, bitterness in the mouth, even accompanied with nausea and vomiting, constipation, sometimes with Jaundice or Fluid retention in the abdomen and ankles, red tongue with yellow and greasy fur, taut rapid pulse.

Herbal medicine treatment

Therapeutic principle: Clearing away pathogenic heat and dampness, Removing blood stasis and anti-cancer.

Recipe: The combination of Oriental wormwood decoction and Decoction of Dissipating blood stasis under diaphragm.

Oriental wormwood (yin cheng), Scutellaria barbata (ban zhi lian), Rhizome smilacis glabrae (Tu fu ling) Rhizoma paridis root (qi ye yi zhi hua) at 20 g each, Chinese angelica root (dang gui) Peach kernel (tao ren), Moutan bark (dan pi), Red peony root (chi shao), Spicebush root (wu yao), Corydalis tuber (yuan hu), Fructus toosendan (chuan lian zi), Umbellate pore-fungus (zhu lin) at 10 g each.

Acupuncture and Moxibustion

Therapeutic principle: Clearing away pathogenic heat and dampness, Removing blood stasis and anti-cancer.

Prescription: Taichong (LR3), Suidao (ST28), Nei guan (PC6), Ganshu (BL18), Zusanli (ST 36), shanyinjiao (SP6), zhongwan (RN12), Tianshu (ST25).

3. Deficiency of Liver-yin and Kidney-yin

Such symptoms of this is pain in the right upper abdomen or right ribs, dizziness, tinnitus, aching pain of the waist and knees, hot sensation in the palms and soles, palpitation and shortness of breath, insomnia, amnesia, spontaneous perspiration, dry mouth, erosion of mucous membrane in the oral cavity, persistent low fever, red tongue with little fur, deep thread and weak pulse.

Herbal medicine treatment

Therapeutic principle: Nourishing the liver and kidney, and anti-cancer.

Recipe: Modified principle of decoction for Invigorating primordial qi.

Scutellaria barbata (ban zhi lian), Rhizome smilacis glabrae (Tu fu ling)

Rhizoma paridis root (qi ye yi zhi hua) at 20 g each; astragalus root (huang qi),Siberian solomonseal rhizome (huang jing)at 20 g each; Ophiopogon root (Mai dong), Schisandra fruit (Wu wei zi), Dried rehmannia root (sheng di) at 15g each; Glossy privet fruit (nu zheng zi), dogwood fruit (shan yu rou) at 10 g each.

All the above drugs are to be decocted in water for oral administration.

Acupuncture and Moxibustion

Therapeutic principle: Replenishing qi, nourishing yin and anti-cancer.

Prescription: guanyuan (RN4), Ganshu (BL18), Shenshu (BL23), Zusanli (ST 36), Sanyinjiao (SP 6), zhongwan (RN12), Tianshu (ST25).

Life style

- 1) Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- 2) Reduce stress through relaxation, Qi-Gong or Tai-Ji.
- 3) Join a support group for people with cancer and their families. Emotional support seems to aid in recovery.