

Fatty Liver Disease Is Linked to Liver, Colorectal and Breast Cancer

Additionally, among those with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, indicators of liver fibrosis are associated with cancer.

December 6, 2017

People with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) have a higher risk not only of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC, the most common form of liver cancer) but also colorectal and breast cancer among men and women, respectively.

Publishing their findings in the *Journal of Hepatology*, researchers studied data on 25,947 Koreans, 8,721 (33.6 percent) of whom had NAFLD. The overall group was followed for a median 7.5 years, or a cumulative 164,671 years.

During the study period, the annual cancer diagnosis rate was 0.7829 percent among those with NAFLD and 0.5928 among those without NAFLD, meaning that fatty liver disease was associated with a 32 percent higher cancer rate.

After adjusting the data for various factors, including demographics and metabolic factors, the researchers found that NAFLD was associated with a 16.73-fold increased rate of liver cancer as well as 2.01-fold increased rate of colorectal cancer among males and a 1.92-fold increased rate of breast cancer among females.

Additionally, high scores on two measures of liver fibrosis (scarring), the NAFLD fibrosis score (NFS) and the FIB-4 score, were associated with a higher risk of all cancers, in particular liver cancer. A high NFS score and a high FIB-4 score were associated with a respective 87 percent and 74 percent increased risk in all cancers.

To read a press release about the study, [click here](#).

To read the study abstract, [click here](#).

To read an accompanying editorial on the study, [click here](#).
