Hepatitis News

The link between diabetes and liver disease

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Many of the 30 million Americans with type 2 diabetes may be at risk of developing liver cancer and cirrhosis, also known as scarring of the liver.

In a recent study of 18 million adults in Europe, which is the largest investigation of its kind, scientists identified individuals with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), the accumulation of liver fat in people who drink little or no alcohol, or non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), an advanced form of NAFLD that can lead to cirrhosis, liver cancer and liver failure.

Researchers found that those with NAFLD or NASH who had a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes were more than two times as likely to develop advanced liver disease as those without the blood sugar condition. This suggests that diabetes may predict the progression of liver disease.

The takeaway, experts say, is that efforts should focus on liver disease education and prevention—as well as monitoring organ function—among people with diabetes.

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