PROJECT INFORMATION

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Changes in Health for Patients Who Complete Treatment for Chronic Hepatitis C Virus -- The PROP up TARGET Study

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What was the research about?

Hepatitis C virus, or HCV, attacks a person's liver. Chronic HCV can lead to liver failure, liver cancer, and death. In the United States, more than 12,000 people die from illness related to HCV every year. In 2013, the Food and Drug Administration approved a new type of HCV treatment called direct-acting antiviral, or DAA, medicine. Compared with older HCV treatments, DAAs have higher cure rates, take less time to get rid of the virus, and are safer.

In this study, the research team wanted to learn more about the short- and long-term changes in symptoms, side effects, and quality of life among people who took DAAs and who no longer had HCV in their blood.

What were the results?

Three months after completing treatment, patients reported

- Less fatigue
- Better sleep quality
- Better ability to do daily tasks

Patients also reported small improvements in symptoms of depression, anger, anxiety, memory and decision making, effect of pain on their life, belly pain, headaches, and overall burden of symptoms in general. However, the improvements in these symptoms weren't large enough to be clearly meaningful to patients.

One year after completing treatment, patients maintained the improvements that were seen after three months. Patients also reported less belly pain than before treatment.

Who was in the study?

The study included 1,346 patients who no longer had HCV in their blood three months after treatment with DAAs. Patients received care from one of 11 health centers across the United States. Of these patients, 60 percent were white, 33 percent were black, and 6 percent were of other races. The average age was 59, and 55 percent were men.

What did the research team do?

The research team surveyed patients before and during treatment and again at three months and at one year after completing treatment. The surveys asked patients about their symptoms and side effects from HCV and quality of life.

An advisory board of people with HCV provided feedback throughout the study.

What were the limits of the study?

Because the study didn't compare DAA treatment with no treatment, the research team can't say for sure that the DAAs caused the improvements seen in the study.

Future research could continue to look into the long-term effects of DAAs.

How can people use the results?

Patients and their doctors can use these results when considering treatments for HCV.

*To learn more about this project, visit
www.pcori.org/Evon283.*