

# Hepatocellular carcinoma

A 'silent killer'



Liver cancer is the **6th most common cancer** in the world<sup>1</sup>

and **hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC)** accounts for **90%** of primary liver cancer cases.<sup>2</sup>



Globally, in 2020 **over 815,000**

people were diagnosed with HCC,<sup>1,2</sup> about 40% of which were in late stages of the disease.<sup>3</sup>

## Risk factors of HCC

**Almost 50%** of all cases

are diagnosed in **China**,<sup>1,4</sup> in large part due to the prevalence of hepatitis B and C.<sup>5</sup>



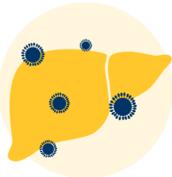
In **recent years**, the incidence and number of deaths from liver cancer has increased around the world.<sup>6,7</sup>



In the US, this increase is faster than any other cancer, having more than tripled since 1980, which in part is due to the rising prevalence of **fatty foods and obesity**, a factor that is increasing the risk globally.<sup>6-9</sup>



## Risk factors include:<sup>2,10</sup>



Hepatitis B and C virus



Fatty foods and obesity



Alcohol



Aflatoxin (a carcinogenic mould found in contaminated food, especially rice)

## Signs and symptoms

HCC often doesn't show symptoms until the advanced stages of the disease,<sup>2</sup> but some people may experience:<sup>10</sup>



Abdominal pain or tenderness



Easy bruising or bleeding



Enlarged abdomen



Unexplained weight loss



Jaundice

## Screening and diagnosis

Surveillance programmes are associated with improved survival.<sup>11</sup>



People at high-risk of developing liver cancer may undergo ultrasound examinations, which can be sensitive enough to detect small masses on the liver,<sup>12</sup> or blood tests for protein levels (AFP).<sup>13</sup>



If liver cancer is suspected, other methods of diagnosis are:<sup>10,13</sup>

- Abdominal CT scan
- Abdominal MRI scan
- Liver biopsy



## Current treatment landscape

There are limited treatments available for people across all stages of liver cancer, and even less if diagnosed at the advanced stage.<sup>13</sup>

In fact, **less than 50%**

of people diagnosed with advanced HCC will survive more than a year after diagnosis.<sup>11</sup>



Recent studies show:



**Less than 30%** of people diagnosed with HCC in the US received any treatment at all<sup>11</sup>



**Only 20%** of people with HCC in China are diagnosed in early stages, when curative treatments are still an option<sup>14</sup>

Treatments currently available across different stages of the disease include:<sup>13</sup>



Surgery to remove masses



Radiation



Liver transplant



Transarterial chemoembolisation



Chemotherapy



Tyrosine kinase inhibitors



Immunotherapies

## Future perspectives for people with HCC



Despite the high prevalence of HCC, people with the disease still have few options and a low survival rate.<sup>6,11</sup>

Recently, immune checkpoint inhibitors, which target the PD-L1 and PD-1 proteins, have been approved and more are being explored for people with HCC.<sup>15</sup>



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