Student and New Professional Subcommittee

Dx

Downloads: Liver Cancer
Liver Cancer

What is Liver Cancer?

- Cancer that starts in the cells of the liver and adjoining tissues
  - Hepatocytes are the primary cell type
- Disrupts function of the liver, including:
  - Make clotting factors to prevent excessive bleeding
  - Help break down, absorb, and store nutrients
  - Break down alcohol, drugs, and toxins in the blood in order to be excreted from the body

Major Types

- Hepatocellular Carcinoma
  - Most common
- Cholangiocarcinoma
  - Bile duct cancer
- Metastatic Liver Cancer
  - Cancer cells from a different part of the body that spread to the liver

Common Signs and Symptoms

- Weight loss
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea or vomiting
- Pain in the abdomen or right shoulder
- Enlarged liver or spleen
- Swelling in the abdomen
- Jaundice of the skin or eyes
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Clinical Implications

- Chronic hepatitis B and C infection, cirrhosis, obesity, and type 2 diabetes mellitus are risk factors for liver cancer
- Frailty, sarcopenia, obesity, and anaerobic threshold can be prognostic factors
- Prehabilitation may shorten postoperative hospital stay and improve outcomes
- Studies have demonstrated higher survival rate in those receiving cancer rehabilitation

Treatments

- Chemotherapy
- Radiation therapy
- Surgical resection, ablation, or transplant
- Targeted drug therapy
- Immunotherapy
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Physical Therapist’s Role

**Screen**
Screen gastrointestinal system, identify red flags and utilize differential diagnosis

**Prehab**
Physical therapy ‘prehab’ before surgical treatment may lead to better outcomes

**Intervene**
Identify and treat impairments from liver cancer and different treatment options

**Educate**
Promote physical therapy from diagnosis through survivorship to improve quality of life and outcomes
Liver Cancer

Takeaways

1. There are modifiable risk factors related to the development of liver cancer.

2. Physical Therapists can aid in addressing impairments along treatment spectrum.

3. Cancer rehabilitation and prehabilitation may contribute to better outcomes and increased survival rates.

4. Advocate for lifelong physical activity to decrease risk factors and poor prognostic indicators of liver cancer.


