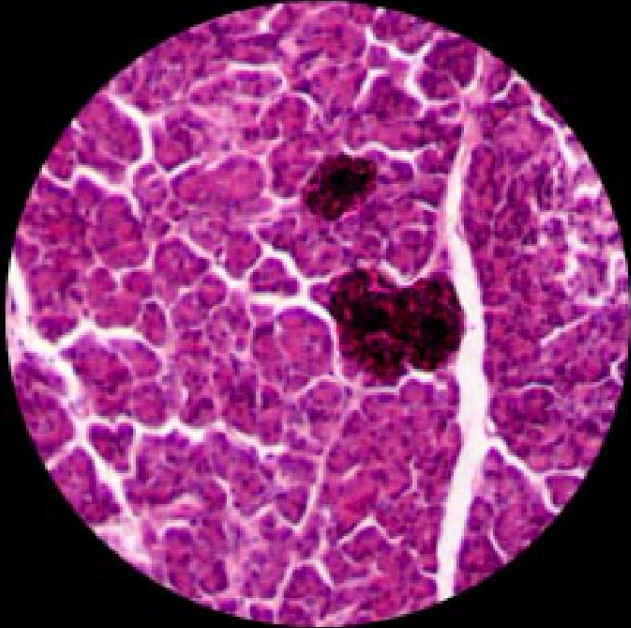




Liver Cancer (Hepatocellular Carcinoma)



MICROSCOPIC VIEW OF CANCER CELLS IN LIVER



Overview

This disease is a type of tumor that begins in the main cells of the liver. The liver is a large gland organ in your upper abdomen. It performs many roles, including helping break down and store nutrients.

Causes

The cause of liver cancer is not always known. It is more common in males, and it is more common in people who have chronic viral hepatitis. In many cases, liver cancer is linked to a condition called cirrhosis. Cirrhosis can develop because of infection by the hepatitis B or C virus, or from alcohol abuse, autoimmune diseases or other factors. Cirrhosis scars the liver. It damages the DNA of liver cells, causing these cells to mutate and turn into cancer cells.

Symptoms

Symptoms of liver cancer can include pain and swelling in the abdomen, loss of appetite and unexpected weight loss. It can cause nausea, vomiting, and white, chalky stools. It can cause a yellowing of the skin and eyes, a condition called jaundice. And it can cause weakness and fatigue.

Treatment

Treatment options for liver cancer may include surgery to remove part of your liver. You may benefit from chemotherapy, radiation therapy or other techniques. You may need a liver transplant. Your doctor will discuss treatment plans that are right for you.