

News Release

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Digestive Disease Week 2013 Conference

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Consuming Coffee Linked to Lower Risk of Detrimental Liver Disease, Mayo Clinic Finds

ROCHESTER, Minn. — Regular consumption of coffee is associated with a reduced risk of primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC), an autoimmune liver disease, Mayo Clinic research shows. The findings were being presented at the Digestive Disease Week 2013 conference in Orlando, Fla.

PSC is an inflammatory disease of the bile ducts that results in inflammation and subsequent fibrosis that can lead to cirrhosis of the liver, liver failure and biliary cancer.

“While rare, PSC has extremely detrimental effects,” says study author Craig Lammert, M.D., a Mayo Clinic gastroenterologist. “We’re always looking for ways to mitigate risk, and our first-time finding points to a novel environmental factor that also might help us to determine the cause of this and other devastating autoimmune diseases.”

The study examined a large group of U.S. patients with PSC and primary biliary cirrhosis (PBC) and a group of healthy patients. Data showed that coffee consumption was associated with reduced risk of PSC, but not PBC. PSC patients were much likelier not to consume coffee than healthy patients were. The PSC patients also spent nearly 20 percent less of their time regularly drinking coffee than the control.

The study suggests PSC and PBC differ more than originally thought, Konstantinos Lazaridis, M.D., a Mayo Clinic hepatologist and senior study author says: “Moving forward, we can look at what this finding might tell us about the causes of these diseases and how to better treat them.”

The National Institutes of Health funded part of this with a grant to principal investigator Dr. Lazaridis. The American Liver Foundation awarded Dr. Lammert a postdoctoral research fellowship.

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