Hepatic decompensation higher with HIV, HCV co-infection

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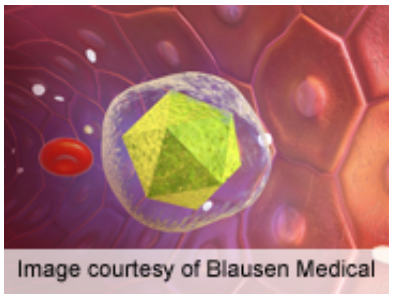

(HealthDay)—Patients co-infected with HIV and hepatitis C virus (HCV) have higher rates of hepatic decompensation than those with HCV monoinfection, according to a study published in the March 18 issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Vincent Lo Re III, M.D., from the University of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia VA Medical Center, and colleagues conducted a retrospective cohort study to compare the incidence of hepatic decompensation between 4,280 antiretroviral-treated patients co-infected with HIV and HCV and 6,079 HCV-monoinfected patients. All patients were HCV treatment-naive and had detectable HCV RNA.

The researchers found that, at 10 years, the incidence of hepatic decompensation was 7.4 percent among co-infected patients and 4.8 percent among monoinfected patients ($P < 0.001$). Co-infected patients had a higher rate of hepatic decompensation than HCV-monoinfected patients (hazard ratio [HR] accounting for competing risks, 1.56). The rate of decompensation was also higher in co-infected patients who maintained HIV RNA levels 3.25); baseline hemoglobin level