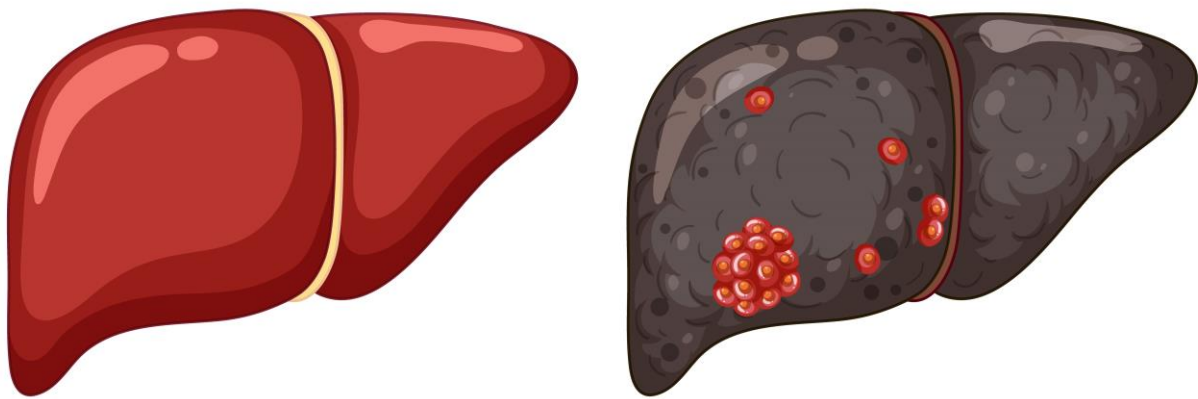


Gastroenterology

Hepatocellular cancer (HCC) surveillance programme



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What is Hepatocellular cancer (HCC)?

Hepatocellular cancer is liver cancer, which can occur on its own or more often in a damaged or scarred liver. We may also offer surveillance to patients with a strong family history of liver cancer.

What is a surveillance programme?

Due to your liver condition your consultant or liver nurse specialist has recommended that we monitor your liver health to look for complications.



Why should you choose surveillance?

Although you may not develop problems from your liver disease, the risk of cancer is higher. The risk in patients with liver disease is around 1 to 8 people in every 100 people (1-8% per year). Therefore, we offer patients the chance to detect and hopefully treat this at an early stage.

The programme is not perfect, and patients can still develop incurable cancer.

What does the programme involve?

Surveillance involves having a blood test and ultrasound every 6 months.

- Alpha-fetoprotein (AFP) is a blood marker which can be raised in some patients who develop liver cancer.
- Ultrasound scan is a simple painless scan that sends soundwaves over some gel and takes images of your liver, allowing us to look at the texture and blood flow. If views are not good with this scan then alternatives like CT or MRI scans can be offered.

What is liver fibrosis?

Liver fibrosis happens when scar tissue forms in the liver because of inflammation or damage. Sometimes this can be improved by treating the cause of this.

Cirrhosis is when the scar tissue (fibrosis) has spread throughout the liver and the size, shape and texture of the liver has changed. Some patients with cirrhosis will still have no symptoms or signs of this.

What should you expect now?

You will receive an appointment for an ultrasound, and you will either be given a blood form or receive the form through the post. We would like you to get these performed close together, if possible.

Patient Information

Ultrasound preparation

Please make sure to only consume clear fluids 4 to 6 hours before the scan.

If you're unable to go to your appointment, please rearrange with the ultrasound department. If you can't attend on short notice, please remember to cancel by calling 024 7696 6933.

Does everybody with significant liver disease have surveillance?

Not everyone will be eligible, particularly as age or frailty increases. You will be asked how you perform certain tasks to help us understand your fitness over time. If someone becomes frailer and treatment of HCC is seen as too high risk, they may no longer be eligible for surveillance. This decision would, of course be discussed with you.

Contact Information

Liver nurse specialist: 024 769 67123

Ultrasound department: 024 7696 6933

For further Information about your liver condition:

British Liver Trust website:

<https://britishlivertrust.org.uk/information-and-support/>

0800 652 7330 (10am to 3pm, Monday to Friday)

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact our Liver Specialist nurses on 024 7696 7123 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

Patient Information

Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This helps us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service. Have your say. Scan the QR code or visit:

www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback



Document History

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