

BMC OPTIMIZES TREATMENT FOR PATIENTS WITH LIVER DISEASES

The incidence of liver disease is increasing nationally at an alarming rate. According to the American Liver Foundation, an estimated 42,000 Americans will die of liver disease this year. While many forms of the disease are preventable, many more can be treated effectively if detected early.

In an effort to comprehensively treat the increasing number of patients with liver disease, Boston Medical Center (BMC) launched the Hepatobiliary Tumor Program more than one year ago. The multidisciplinary treatment program optimizes care for patients with primary and metastatic liver and biliary tract cancers. The program brings together specialists from the various disciplines necessary for treating these conditions, including diagnostic and interventional radiology, gastroenterology, surgical oncology, medical oncology, radiation oncology and pathology.

Liver cancer is one of the only cancers with rising mortality rates in the U.S. This troubling statistic is related to three precursors that are common among the American population: Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and fatty liver disease. The deadly relationship between these precursors and the development of liver disease is frightening, especially when considering that more than 5 million Americans have Hepatitis B or C, and an estimated one in every four Americans has fatty liver disease.

“These are high-risk patients with a high-risk disease. The Hepatobiliary Tumor Program, which mirrors the model of the award-winning BMC Breast Health Program, provides rapid access, coordinated care and specialists renowned in their fields,” said Michael Stone, M.D., chief of the Section of Surgical Oncology at BMC, and professor of surgery at Boston University School of Medicine.

“A centralized access point by phone and pager is in place,” continued Stone, “and patients can be referred electronically so their access to care can be facilitated. Our strategy to identify and provide rapid access for patients has helped us to efficiently treat the growing number of patients with these diseases.”

In just one year, the program experienced a substantial increase in patient volume. One element of the program is ultrasound surveillance to monitor patients with cirrhosis, scar tissue that replaces normal, healthy tissue, blocking the flow of blood through the organ and diminishing liver function, for the development of liver tumors. Through BMC’s multidisciplinary Hepatobiliary Tumor Program, patients with liver tumors have access to every possible diagnostic and treatment modality, including liver transplantation.

“Our multidisciplinary approach continues to evolve in response to our growing population with liver disease,” says David Nunes, M.D., gastroenterologist in the Hepatobiliary Tumor Program. “We continue to increase the capacity of the program to best treat patients suffering from these diseases.”



To learn more about the Hepatobiliary Tumor Program, please call **617.414.2600**.

To refer a patient, call **1.800.682.2862**
or email mdconnect@bmc.org.

CENTER FOR DIGESTIVE DISORDERS
Moakley Building, 2nd Floor, 830 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02118



Boston Medical Center is the primary teaching affiliate of Boston University School of Medicine.