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French study says eating more vegetables may cut liver cancer risk by 65%

25 February 2025 | News

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A new study published in JHEP Reports underscores the potential protective role of vegetable consumption in reducing the risk of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) among patients with liver cirrhosis. The research in France highlights how dietary

habits may play a crucial role in liver cancer prevention for high-risk groups.

The study reveals that 42.5 per cent of patients with liver cirrhosis did not consume sufficient amounts of fruits and/or vegetables. Notably, while fruit consumption alone did not show a clear link to reducing liver cancer risk, patients who consumed at least 240 grams of vegetables daily exhibited a 65 per cent lower likelihood of developing HCC. Despite general dietary recommendations of at least 400 grams of fruits and vegetables daily, only 57.5 per cent of study participants met this target.

Participants with confirmed liver cirrhosis were monitored over several years to investigate the impact of diet on liver cancer development. Detailed food intake questionnaires, administered by trained dietitians, recorded participants' eating habits. Researchers categorised dietary patterns based on whether participants met the 400-gram daily intake recommendation for combined fruits and vegetables or at least 240 grams of either fruits or vegetables individually.

Interestingly, the study found no significant protective effect for fruit consumption alone or surpassing the 400-gram combined intake. Using advanced statistical methods to account for variables like age, sex, and lifestyle factors, the researchers concluded that increased vegetable intake might be a key dietary strategy in preventing HCC.

These findings suggest that public health initiatives aimed at individuals with liver disease should prioritise promoting vegetable consumption as a simple yet effective approach to reducing cancer risk.