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Chronic Hepatitis C and HCC : What is new?

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Merck, Roche, Novartis, Bayer, BMS, Gilead Science,
Tibotec, Vertex, Janssen, Achillion, Lundbeck,
GSK, GenSpera, AbbVie, Alfa Wasserman, Intercept.

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Tibotec, Roche, Novartis, Bayer, BMS, Gilead
Science, Vertex, Merck, Janssen, AbbVie

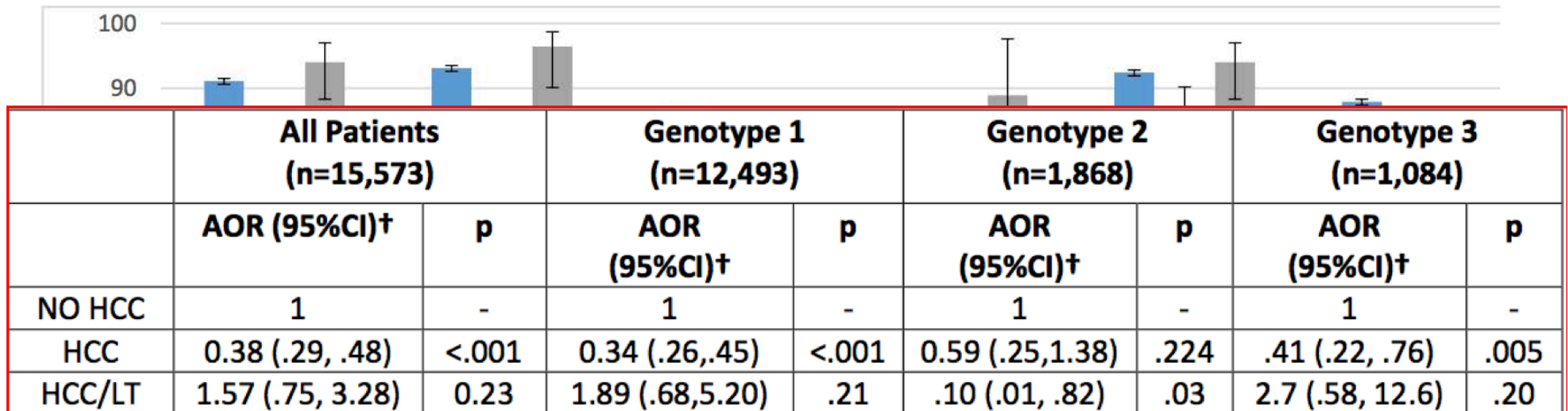
Where Therapy of Hepatitis C Stands Now

- **SVR in >95% of patients**
- **Difficult-to-cure populations no longer difficult**
 - HIV co-infections, renal failure
 - Cirrhosis, transplant population
 - DAA failures
- **Current "suboptimal" treatment outcomes**
 - Decompensated cirrhosis
 - HCV-3 cirrhosis with treatment failure
- **Areas of uncertainty**
 - HBV-HCV co-infected
 - Patients with active HCC

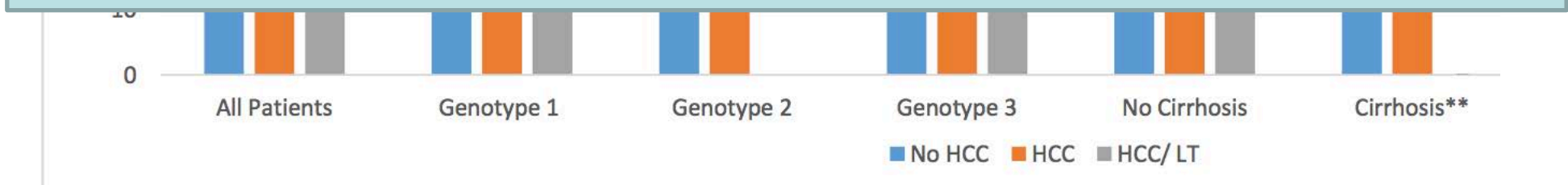
Chronic Hepatitis C and HCC : What is new?

1. Should HCV infection be treated prior to cancer ablation/resection?
 2. Is HCC risk modified by DAA therapy of HCV?
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Efficacy of IFN-free HCV Therapy in Patients with Active HCC. The Veterans Affairs Cohort



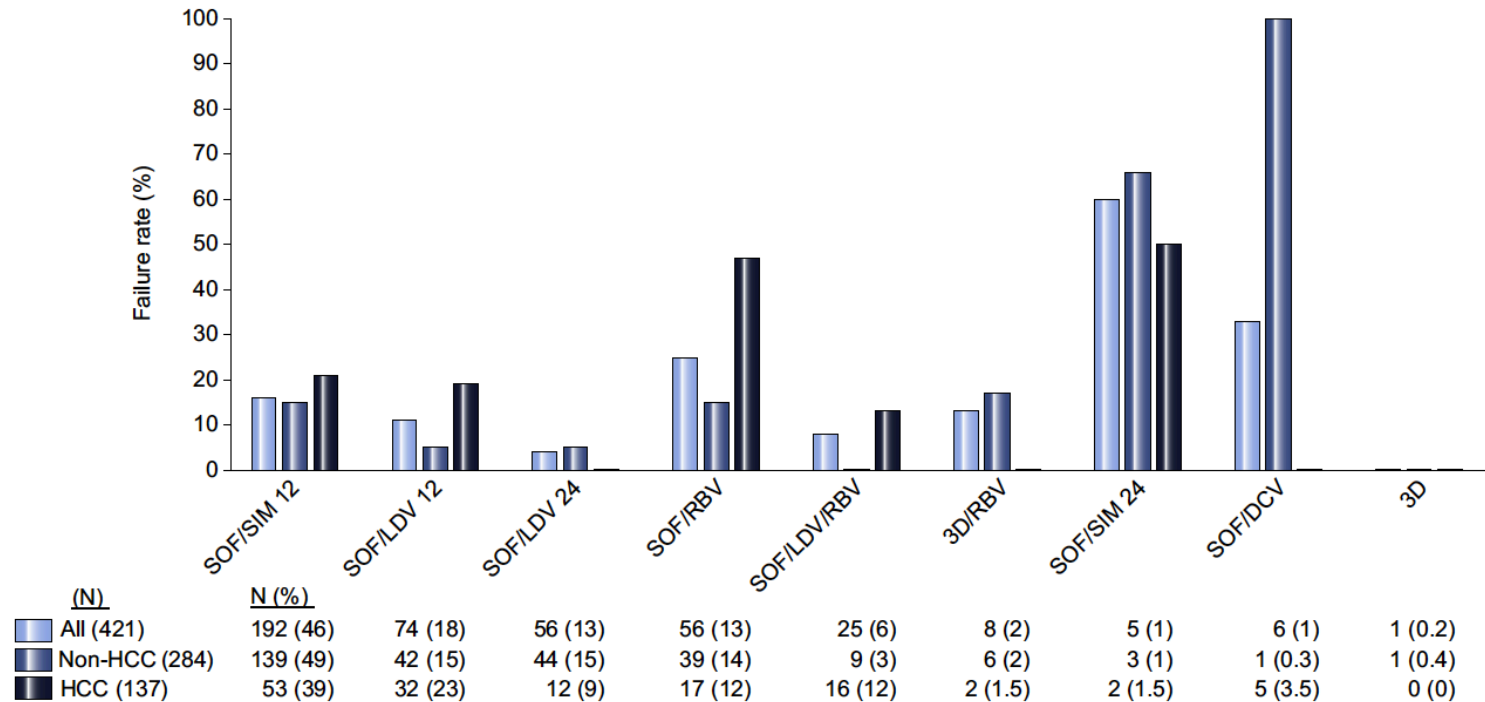
The association between HCC and treatment failure persisted after adjustment for cirrhosis, markers of liver dysfunction, and genotype



Decreased Response to DAA of Patients with HCC NW University of Chicago

Failure Rates : 42% in HCC vs 3% in HCC-free

Inadequate regimen*	2.85	1.32–6.16	0.008
Active tumor	8.49	3.90–18.49	<0.001



Antiviral Therapy of Waitlisted Patients with Compensated Cirrhosis and HCC

Potential benefits

- High SVR rates can be achieved
- Reduce posttransplant recurrence rate if SVR achieved before transplant
- May reduce risk of decompensation and death on the waiting list
- May increase likelihood of tolerating locoregional therapy for HCC
- May improve QOL while on waiting list

Potential harm

- If treatment failure, viral resistance is likely and may limit retreatment options in short-term
- If ribavirin-inclusive DAA regimen, tolerability may be reduced
- May disadvantage patients from receiving HCV-positive grafts
- Potential increase in HCC activity after SVR
- Treatment to prevent recurrence is a lower priority as effective therapies are available posttransplant

International Liver Transplantation Society

Recommendation 1.1

We suggest that waitlisted HCV-infected patients with compensated cirrhosis and HCC be treated with antiviral therapy.

Quality of evidence: Low

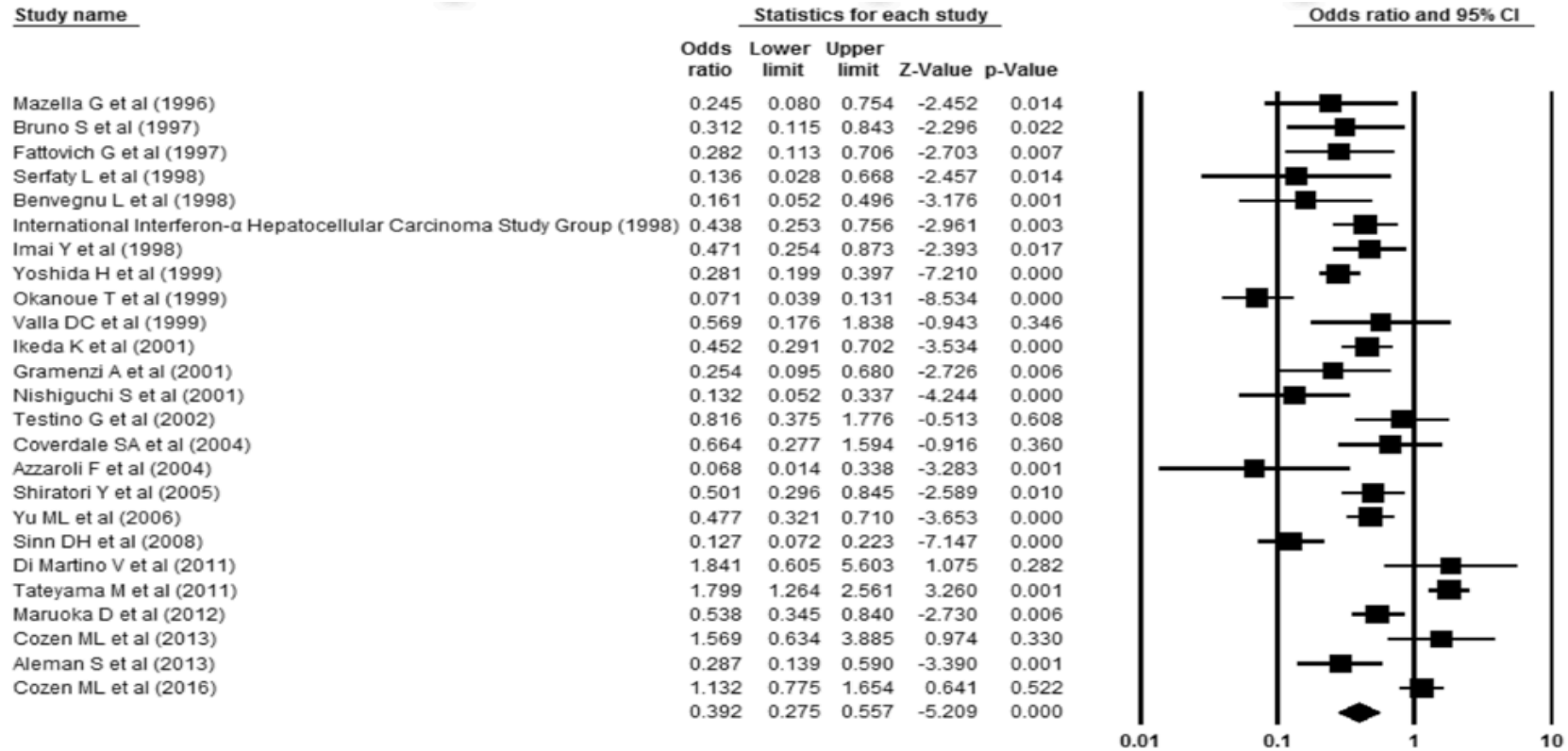
Strength of recommendation: Conditional

Chronic Hepatitis C and HCC : What is new?

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Partial Prevention of HCC by IFN Therapy

A Meta-analysis of 59 Studies

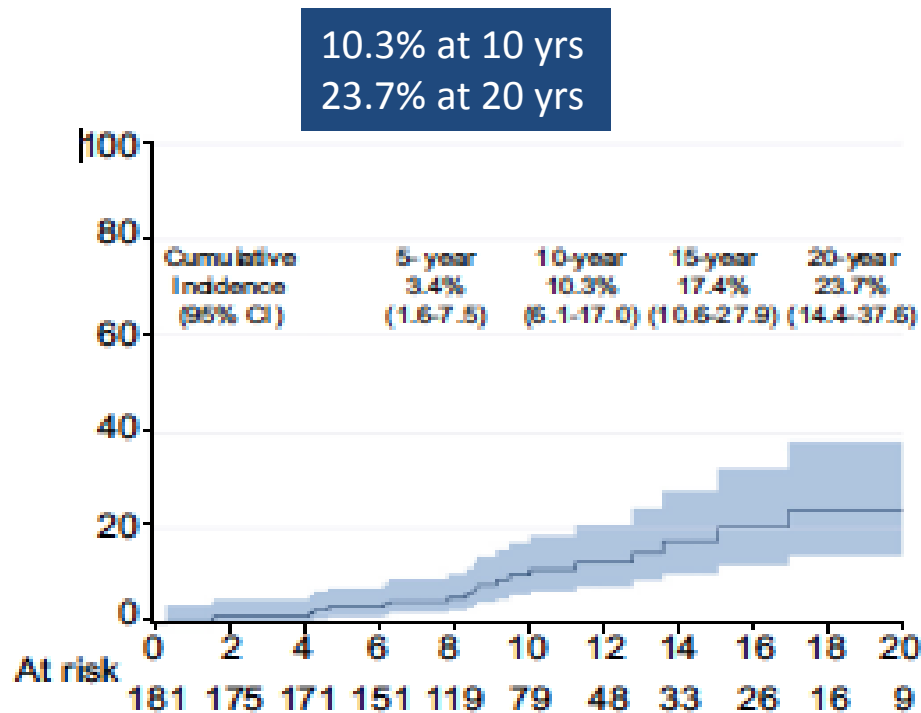


OR for SVR vs non-SVR: **HCC**
AC Mortality

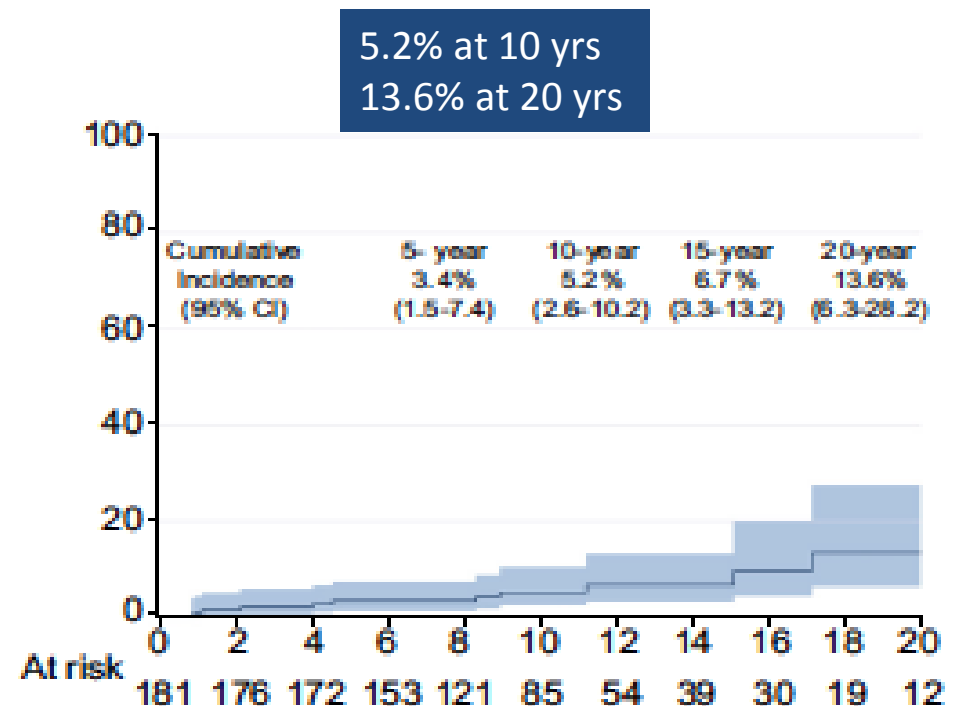
0.203 (CI 0.164-0.251)
0.255 (CI 0.199-0.326)

Survival of HCV Cirrhotics and SVR to Peg/RBV Is Comparable to the General Population.

Hepatocellular Carcinoma



Liver Decompensation





Is De Novo Occurrence of HCC Modified by DAA Therapy of HCV?

Author	HCC /Cirrhosis	Follow-up (mo.)	HCC Incidence
Kozbial	16/173	12	4.8% SVR <u>vs</u> 6.0% all
Cardoso	4/54	12	7.4% (all SVR)
Conti	9/285	6	2.5% SVR <u>vs</u> 3.2% all
Cheung	38/667	6	5.4% SVR <u>vs</u> 11.1% untreated
Kobayashi	2/77	60	2.6% <u>vs</u> 2.3% IFN treated

Increased Risk of HCC in HCV Cirrhotic Patients After DAA. A Multicenter Study Spain

A Multicenter Prospective Study in Italy and Spain

Cohort : 94 HCV, 30 HBV and 133 NASH and/or ASH

Independent predictors of de-novo HCC

- DAA (OR 4.770, CI 1.395-16.316, p=0.013)
- Large varices (OR 3.857, CI 1.127-13.203, p=0.032)

Faillaci et al Hepatology 208



Incidence of HCC Is Reduced After DAA Therapy

129 Veterans Affairs Hospitals

- Adjusted HR of HCC in SVR : 0.28 (0.22-0.36) $p < .0001$
- 44.8% HCC diagnosed during DAA treatment were classified as stage I
- Predictors of persistent HCC risk after SVR:

Advanced age, cirrhosis, diabetes

Caveats

- HCC diagnosed with ICD-9 and 10 codes
- 7.7% patients excluded due to lack of SVR data

All-causes Mortality Is Reduced by DAA in Parallel 129 Veterans Affairs Hospitals

Non advanced HCV : full report in Hepatology

- SVR to DAA	39,374 (96,8%)	*mortality = 1.18
- Non SVR to DAA	1,290 (3,2%)	mortality = 2.84
- Untreated	62,682	mortality = 3.84

*x 100 patients x yr

Buckus et al. Hepatology. 2018 Jan 29. doi: 10.1002/hep.29811

A Prospective Observational Study with Planned Surveillance for HCC.NAVIGATOR

Second year follow-up

- HCC rates :
 - Metavir stage F3 = 0%
 - Child-Pugh A = 0.25%
 - Child-Pugh B = 0.69%
- Aggressive tumor : 29% , mostly within 6 mo.of DAA therapy
non SVR > SVR

Romano A et al J Hepatol 2018

HCC after DAA in HCV Compensated Cirrhosis

Prospective Multicenter CIR-VIR Study

- 1270 patients
- 3 yr HCC in SVR : DAA 6.0% vs IFN 2.9% vs non SVR 30.3%, $p < 0.0001$
- SVR-DAA vs SVR-IFN = HR 2.46 ,CI 1.18-5.11, $p = 0.01$

HCC Predictors

Lack of surveillance pre DAA, co-morbidities & CPT stage

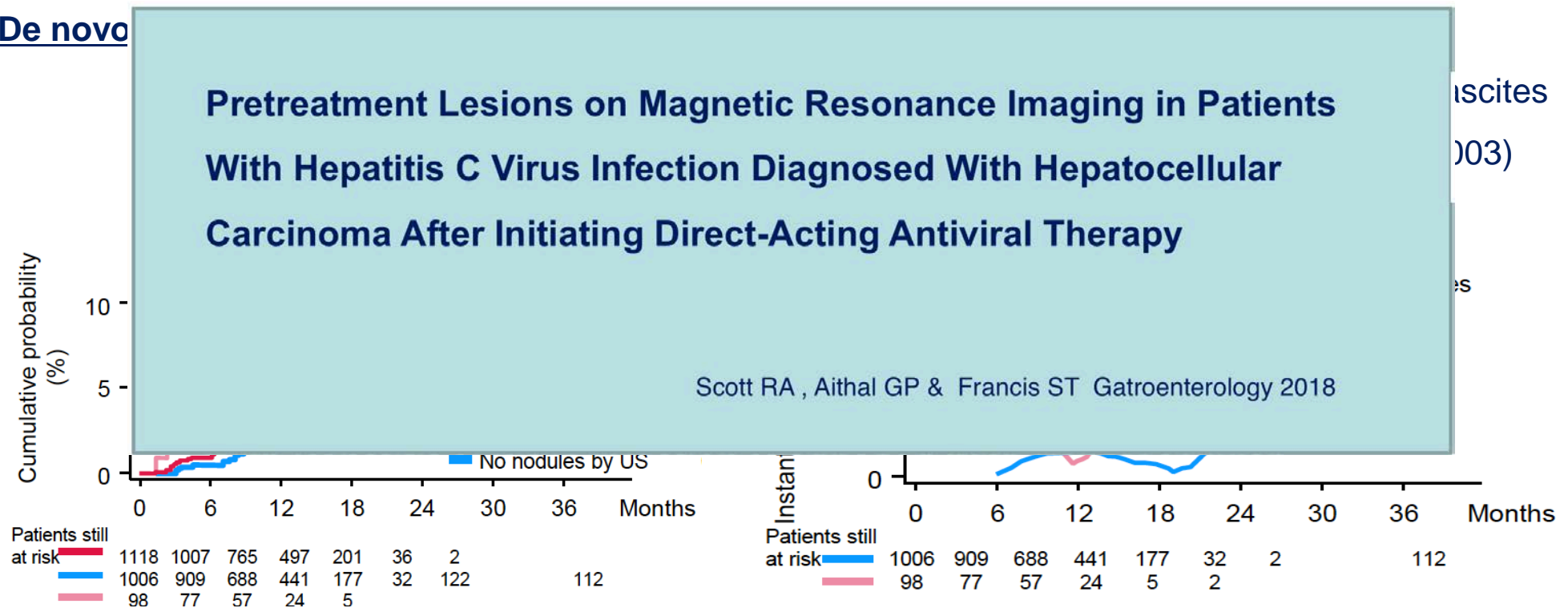
Groups	Number at risk (events)										
DAA	336	(12)	263	(3)	117	(0)	13	(0)	6	(0)	4
SVR-IFN	495	(2)	474	(9)	436	(3)	391	(6)	352	(3)	260
Non-SVR	923	(17)	797	(33)	676	(42)	518	(22)	400	(18)	288

Groups	Number at risk (events)					
DAA (IPTW weights)	956	698	384	92	53	43
SVR-IFN (IPTW weights)	1076	1043	965	849	771	532
Non-SVR (IPTW weights)	1029	892	760	613	478	357

De-novo HCC after DAA Driven by Pre-existing Nodules.A Multicenter Prospective Study

Annual rates - 6.4% in non malignant nodules vs 2.7% in nodule-free.

De novo



Chronic Hepatitis C and HCC : What is new?

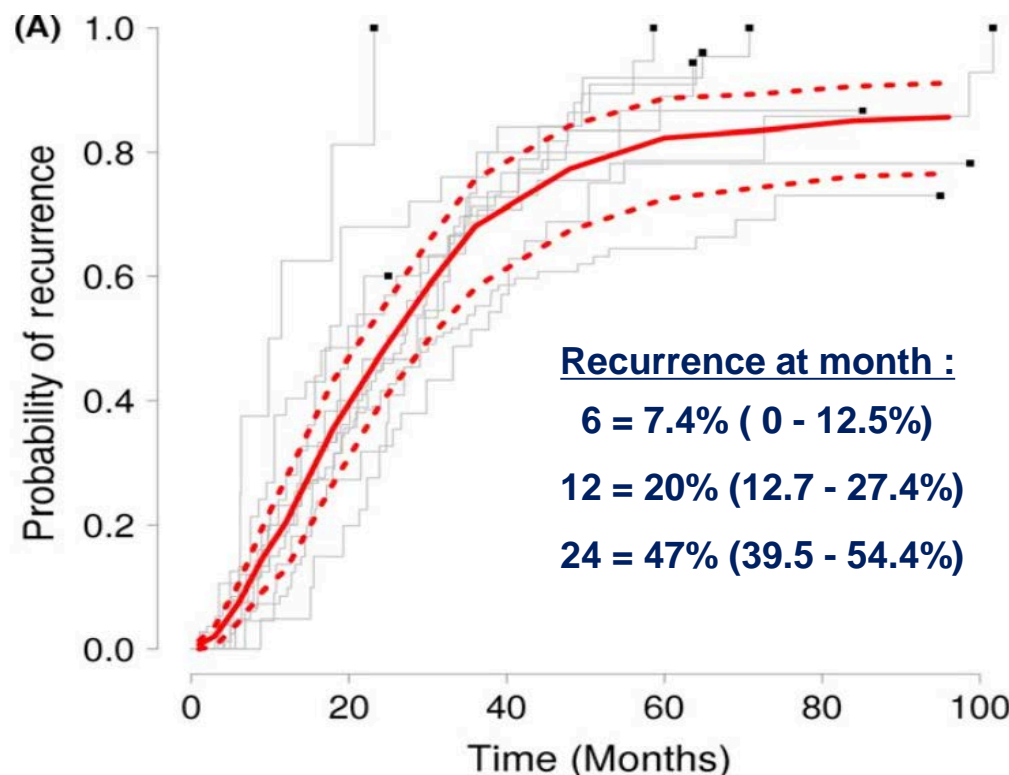
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Recurrence Rates of HCC in HCV Viremic Patients After Curative Resection or Ablation

META ANALYSIS

Ikeda 2000
Suou 2001
Shiratori 2003
Hung 2005
Nishiguchi 2005
Yamanaka 2005
Mazzaferro 2006
Kudo 2007
Jeong 2007
Kanogawa 2014
Petta 2016

Total of 701 viremic patients



Recurrence risk : albumin, RCT and follow-up

Mortality risk : tumor size and AFP

HCV Decompensation Drives Mortality After a Cure of Early HCC.A Multicenter Study

- 328 BCLC 0/A HCV viremic patients with a fully eradicated HCC
- After 5 years : 44% OS , 64% had recurrence , 44% decompensated

Predictors of 5-year OS

- Early hepatic decompensation (10%) HR 7.52 (1.23–13.48)
- Early recurrence (21%) HR 2.50 (1.23–5.05)
- Esophageal varices at baseline (38%) HR 1.66 (1.02–2.70)
- Age HR 1.04 (1.02–1.07)

DAA and Increased Risk of HCC Recurrence

The Start of the Debate

CONFIRMATORY STUDIES

- Conti et al, J Hepatol 2016
- Reig et al, Multicenter study in Spain, EASL ILC Amsterdam 2017
- El Kassas et al, JVH 2018 (increased severity not confirmed)

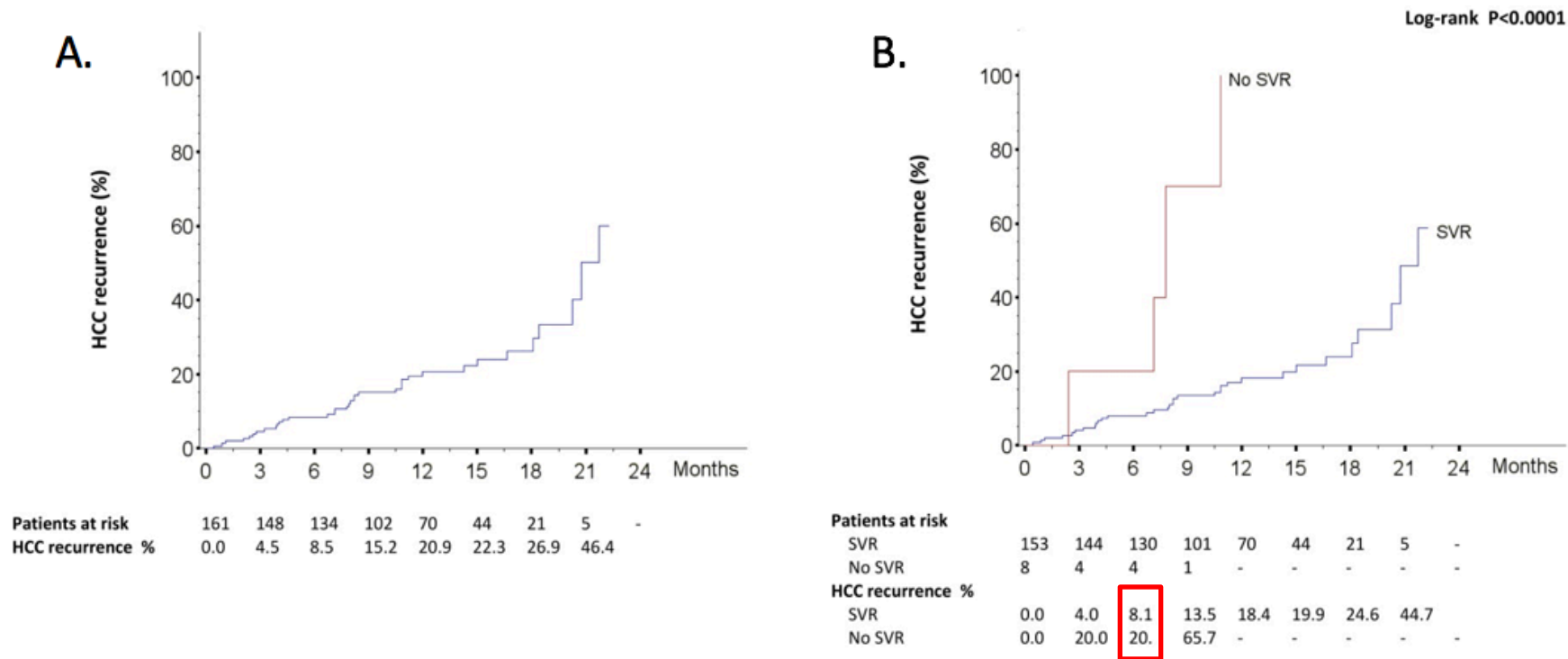
Studies Denying Increased Recurrence of HCC After DAA Therapy of HCV

Study	Design	N (DAAs)	% cirrhosis % CPT-B	Time 0	Follow-up (months)	Recurrence
Zavaglia et al. J. Hep 2016 (Letter)	Retrospective	31	100 19	Start DAA	8	3.2%
Cheung J. Hep 2016	Prospective*	29	100 83	Start DAA	15	6.89%
HEPATHER J. Hep 2016	Prospective*	189	80 NR	NR	26	0.73 vs 0.66 /100p/mo
CIRVIR J. Hep 2016	Prospective*	13	100 NR	HCC treatment	21	1.1 vs 1.73 /100p/mo
Virlogeux Liver Int 2017	Prospective*	23	100 0	HCC treatment	15	1.7 vs 4.2 /100p/mo
Nagata J. Hep 2017	Prospective*	83	NR	HCC treatment	24	29%

*** HCC not a primary endpoint, retrospectively analysed from prospective databases**

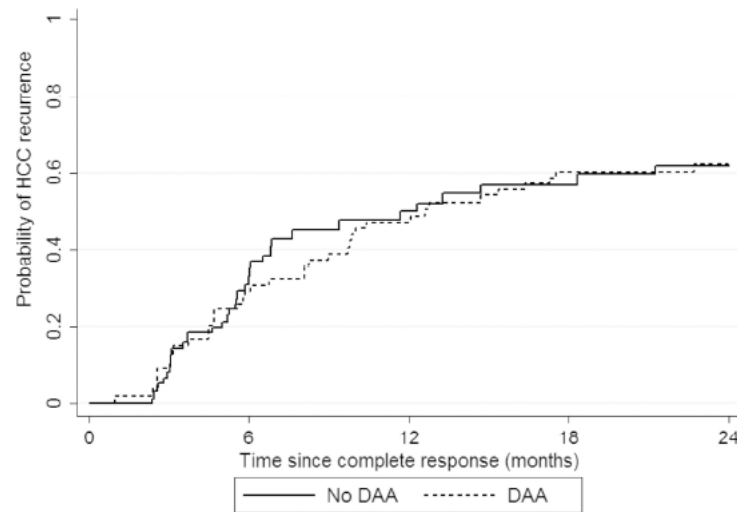
HCC Recurrence after DAA Therapy of HCV A Multicenter Prospective Study, Italy

- A prospective population study from 10 referral centers in Italy
- HCC after 1-yr : 50/1766 de-novo and **38/166 recurrences**



HCC Recurrence after LAT in Waitlisted Patients at UCSF Transplant Center

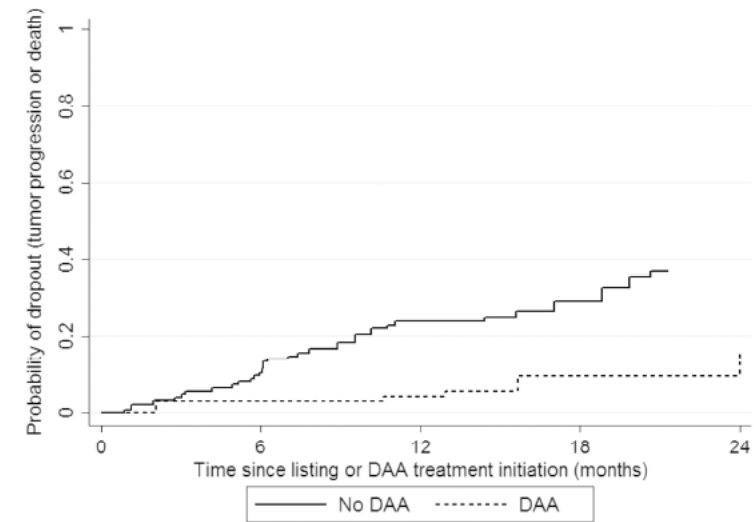
HR 0.91, 95% CI 0.58-1.42, $p=0.67$



Number of patients at risk

Month	0	6	12	18	24
No DAA	59	30	13	3	1
DAA	61	38	23	6	3

HR 0.30, 95% CI 0.13-0.69, $p=0.005$



Number of patients at risk

Month	0	6	12	18	24
No DAA	87	57	32	11	0
DAA	62	45	25	15	7

Post-transplant HCC Recurrence Following DAA Therapy of HCV in the Wait List

Study	Pt #	HCC at explant	Months btwn HCC diagnosis to LT	Recurrence
Yang et al	18	60% > Milan	n.a.	<u>5 (27.8%)</u> * 4-17 mo.post-LT 60% MVI
Donato et al	28	29% > Milan 35% complete necrosis 35% MVI	3-38	<u>3 (10.7%)</u> * 13-20 mo. post-LT 100% MVI
Pascual et al	15	-	-	<u>1(6.6%)</u> 5 mo.post-LT 10 bridged with TACE

Chronic Hepatitis C and HCC Risk : What is new?

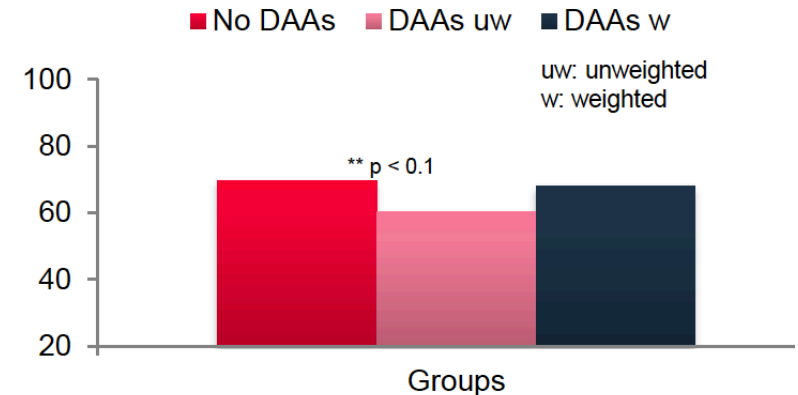
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Is HCC Developing After DAA More Aggressive ?

- 420 consecutive patients with HCC/HCV cirrhosis undergoing liver resection in 18 Italian centers.
- 77 (18.3%) developed either recurrent or de novo HCC after DAA therapy.
- The study group showed significantly smaller tumors than the control group (25 mm vs. 35 mm).
- The study group showed a significantly lower incidence of severe complications (3.4% vs. 9.3%) and early postoperative mortality (2.0% vs 5.4%).

Variables	No DAAs (n=342) N° of patients evaluated Median (IQR) or %	DAAs pre Resection (n=324) N° of patients evaluated Median (IQR) or %
Largest Diameter (mm)**	34 (22-55)	27 (20-43)
Multinodular	76 (22.2)	78 (24.1)
Microvascular invasion	134 (39.2)	112 (34.5)
Macrovascular invasion	27 (7.9)	33 (10.1)
Poorly differentiated	164 (48.0)	155 (47.7)
Satellitosis	59 (17.3)	49 (15.1)
Margin < 2mm	135 (39.4)	135 (41.6)
Aggressive pathology	238 (69.6)	222 (67.9)

Rate of HCC-G3 or vascular invasion or satellitosis








Increased Recurrence/Aggressiveness After DAA

A Confirmatory Multicenter Study

Whole cohort (n=77)		
Median follow-up,months	12.4 (IQR: 8.4-18-7)	16.7% BSC
HCC progression	n= 24 (31.2%)	
Death	n=5 (6.5%)	
		37.5 % Ablation Resection LT
HCC recurrence (n=24)		
Median months between start DAA and 1 st HCC recurrence	3.5 (IQR: 2-7.6)	45.8 % TACE Sorafenib Regorafenib RE Clinical Trials
2 nd recurrence / progression	n=10	
Median months between 1 st - 2 nd HCC recurrence/progression	6 (IQR:3.2-8.2)	
Recurrence/progression within 6 months of 1 st recurrence	6/20 (30%)	
Death	n=5 (20.8%)	

Is HCC Recurrence Exacerbated by DAA Therapy?

AASLD Liver Meeting 2017

Author	Abstract #	N of patients	HCC Recurrence Rates
Nakagawa	66	725	Unchanged
Degasperi	77	565	Unchanged
Sangiovanni	370	594	Reduced, >% at 30 weeks
Joko	1386	347	Unchanged*
Cimavilla	1391	1,126	 >BCLC B-D
Monto	1412	164	 Rapid onset
Ohki	1418	51	Reduced*
Minami	421	163	Unchanged
Yousif	459	158	 Unchanged, > Aggressive
Kuftinec	1554	177	 Rapid growth
Nakao	1565	843	Unchanged
Urabe	1579	119	Unchanged
Teng	1609	123	Reduced
Singal	1361	191	 Not increased, shorter time to recurrence

*Compared to IFN treated patients

Increased Incidence vs Accelerated Recurrence of HCC in DAA Treated Patients?

A retrospective study of 191 patients in 10 US centers

- Jan 2013 - dec 2016 107 DAA treated
- HCC treatment 32% Res, 35% LAT, 27% TACE
- Recurrence rates n. 87, 42% DAA vs 53% untreated(p=n.s)
- Days to recurrence 223 DAA vs 554 untreated (p<.006)
- HCC beyond Milan 27%

Increased Occurrence/Recurrence of HCC After IFN-free DAA. Facts or Artifacts?

Hypothesis : a swift removal of HCV might cause

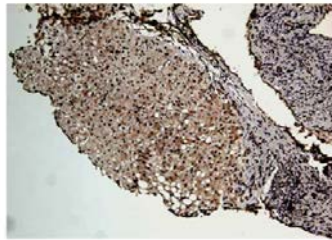
- Impairment of NK cells-mediated tumor immuno-surveillance.
- TRAIL-related de-escalation of apoptosis.
- Impaired tumor control following reduction of non-specific inflammatory cells.

Clues : reactivation of HBV and Herpes virus in HCV co-infected patients treated with DAA. Coagulation pattern modified during DAA therapy.

Liver Angiopoietin-2 Predicts De Novo and Recurrent HCC after DAA Therapy of HCV

Recurrent and **de novo** HCCs had significantly higher liver fibrosis scores, portal pressure, and systemic inflammation than non-recurrent HCC or patients never developing HCC

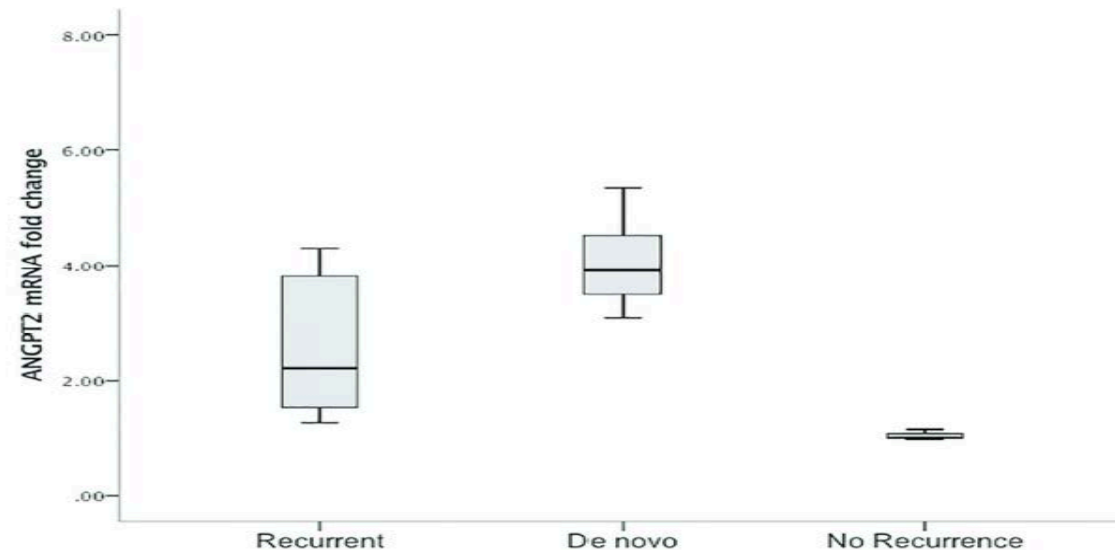
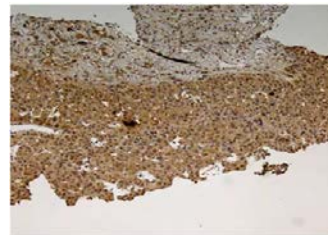
Before DAA



Liver after DAA



**De-novo HCC
After DAA**



EASL Recommendations for HCV Therapy 2018

Recommendations

- HCV treatment should not be withheld in patients with cirrhosis and these patients will require post-SVR HCC surveillance, because the risk of *de novo* or incident HCC is reduced but not abolished by SVR (**A1**).
- Whether antiviral therapy leads to a long-term survival benefit by reducing the risk of recurrent HCC in patients with treated HCV-associated HCC is unknown. However, these patients frequently have advanced fibrosis or cirrhosis and should receive appropriate antiviral therapy for their liver disease, while careful HCC surveillance is required in these patients (**B1**).

Cost-effectiveness Analysis of HCC Screening in Hepatitis C Cirrhosis after SVR

Parameter	ICER (\$/QALY)		HCC Incidence ^{1,2} %/Year
	q6m	q12m	
No cirrhosis	\$339,876	\$134,345	0.16–0.34
Cirrhosis	\$42,823	\$31,096	1.39–1.82
FIB-4 < 3.25	\$103,976	\$63,635	0.41
FIB-4 > 3.25	\$38,928	\$28,898	2.16
APRI < 2	Dominated	\$841,181	0.093
APRI > 2	\$55,916	\$38,516	0.89

Under/over willingness to pay threshold of \$50,000/QALY

- Cost effectiveness sensitive to HCC incidence (~1.1%/year threshold for q6m US).
- US surveillance cost effective in cirrhosis, unlikely in non cirrhosis
- APRI and FIB-4 can identify patients for whom post-SVR surveillance is likely to be cost-effective

DAA Therapy and HCC . Clues From the Literature

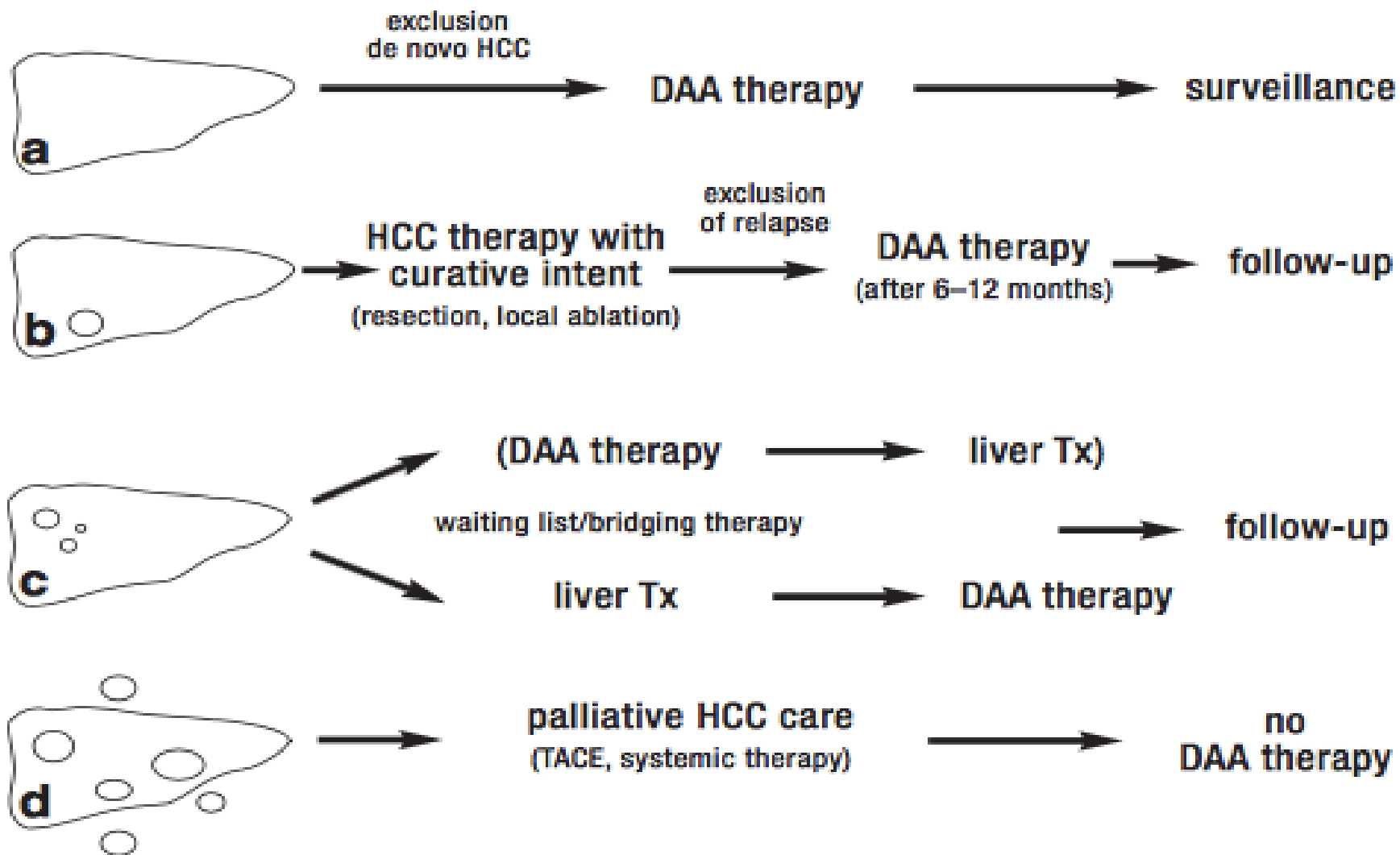
- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Should HCV be treated prior to HCC eradication? | No, maybe in listed? |
| 2. Is the incidence of de-novo HCC increased? | No, likely to be reduced |
| 3. Are de-novo tumors more aggressive? | No, sparse cases only |
| 4. Is time to recurrence from a tumor cure shortened? | Yes, significantly |
| 5. Is the pattern of recurrent HCC modified? | Unclear, prospective studies needed |



EASL Recommendations for Management of HCC

Recommendations	Level of evidence	Grade of recommendation
Once cirrhosis is established: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Antiviral therapy* is beneficial in preventing cirrhosis progression and decompensation• Successful antiviral therapy reduces but does not eliminate the risk of HCC development	Moderate	
For patients with HCV-associated cirrhosis and treated HCC: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• HCC recurrence rate is high even after SVR with DAA therapy[†]• Close surveillance is advised in these patients• The benefit of viral cure must be weighed against a potentially higher recurrence risk	Low	Strong

Recommendations of the German Alliance for Liver Cancer (GALC)



EASL CPG. Post-treatment Surveillance of Patients Who Achieve an SVR

- Non-cirrhotic patients with SVR should be retested for ALT and HCV RNA at 48 weeks post-treatment, then discharged if ALT is normal and HCV RNA is negative.
- Patients with pre-existing cofactors for liver disease (notably, history of alcohol drinking and/or type 2 diabetes) should be carefully and periodically subjected to a thorough clinical assessment.
- The exact duration of HCC surveillance in patients with advanced fibrosis or cirrhosis who achieve an SVR is unknown in the current state of knowledge, but is probably indefinite .

Propensity Score Analysis of a Prospective Database of HCC After IFN-free DAA. Japan

Cohorts 1145 treated with IFN vs 752 with IFN-free DAA .

Incident HCC (3-yr) 3.3% in IFN vs 1.4% in IFN-free $p = 0.49$

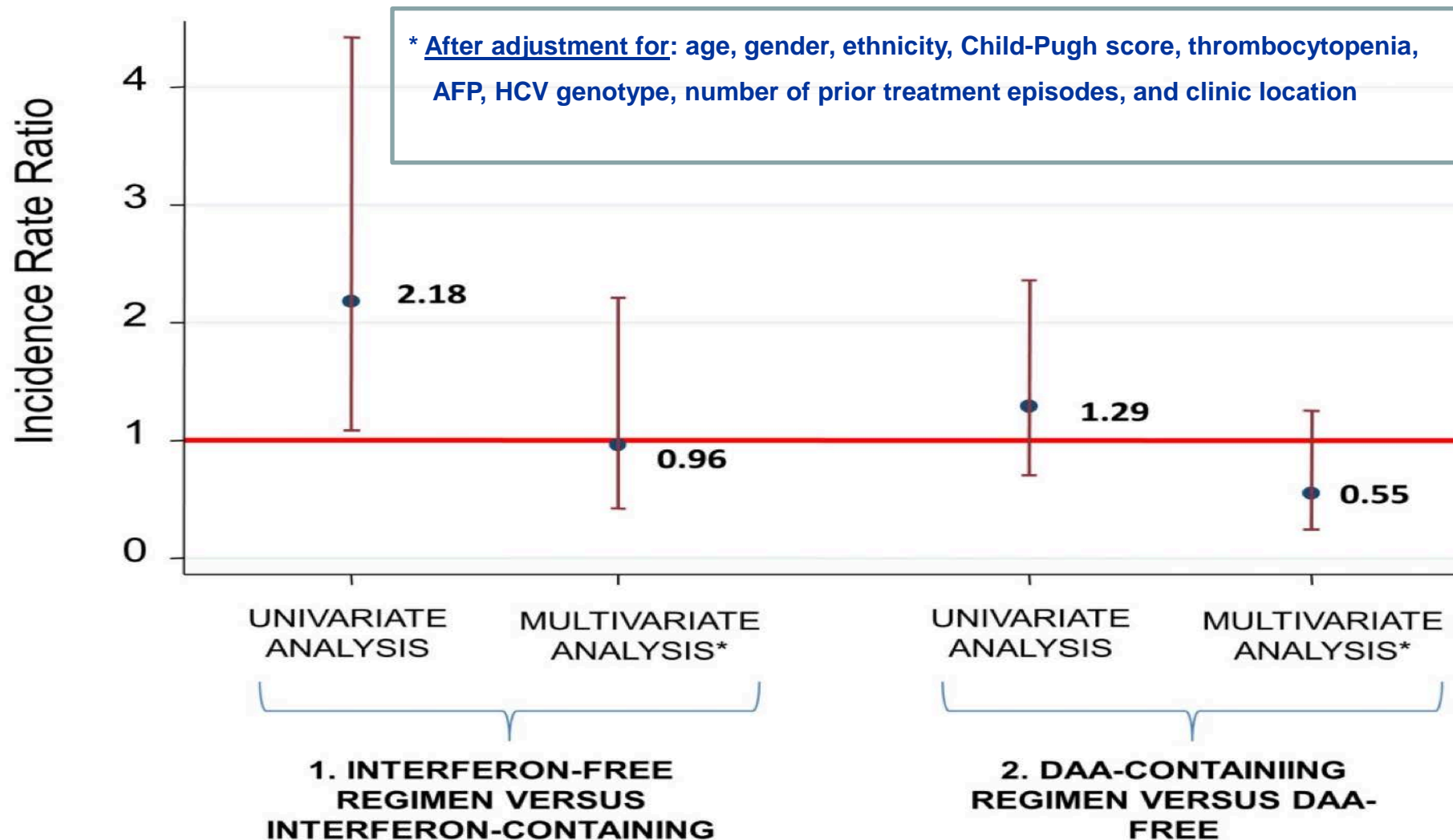
Recurrent HCC (5-yr) 54.2% in IFN vs 45.1% in IFN-free $p = 0.54$

HCC Predictor higher levels of post-treatment AFP or *Wisteria floribunda* agglutinin positive Mac-2 binding protein (WFA+M2BP)

Propensity Score Analysis of a Prospective Database of HCC After IFN-free DAA. Japan

Cohorts	1145 treated with IFN <u>vs</u> 752 with IFN-free DAA
Incident HCC (3-yr)	3.3% in IFN <u>vs</u> 1.4% in IFN-free $p = 0.49$
<u>Recurrent HCC (5-yr)</u>	<u>54.2% in IFN vs 45.1% in IFN-free DAA</u> $p = 0.54$
HCC Predictor	higher levels of post-treatment AFP or <i>Wisteria floribunda</i> agglutinin positive Mac-2 binding protein (WFA+M2BP)

HCC Occurrence After IFN vs DAA Therapy



DAA and Increased HCC risk. Facts or Artifacts?

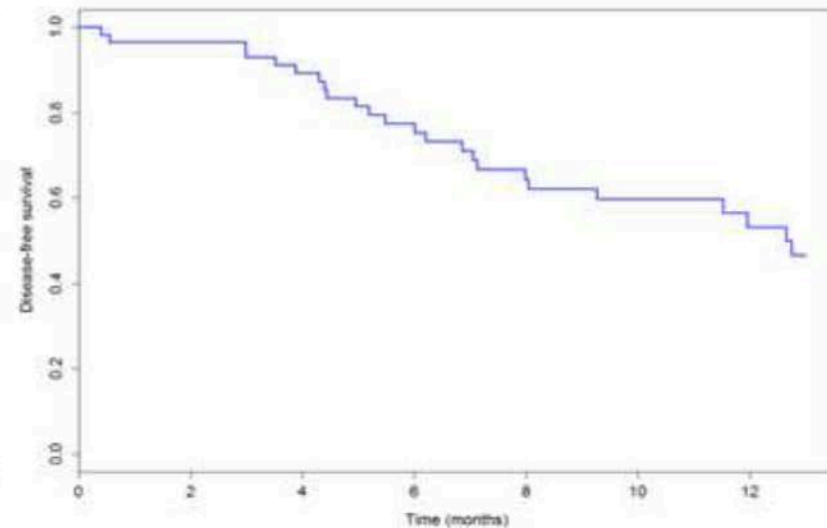
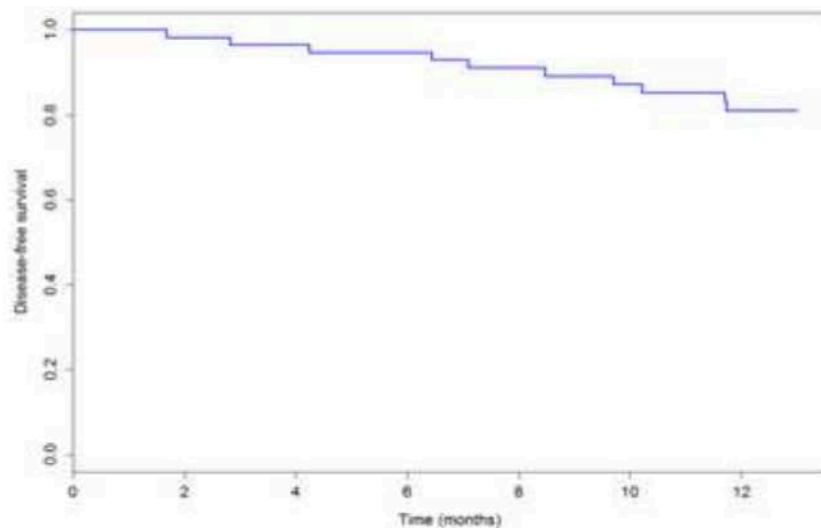
- Populations with incremental higher risk of HCC than IFN candidates
 - Imbalance of pro- and anti-tumour function of the immune system:
 - altered NK function
 - altered expression of IFN response
 - altered immuno surveillance
-

A Multicenter Study of HCC Recurrence Following IFN-free Therapy of Hepatitis C

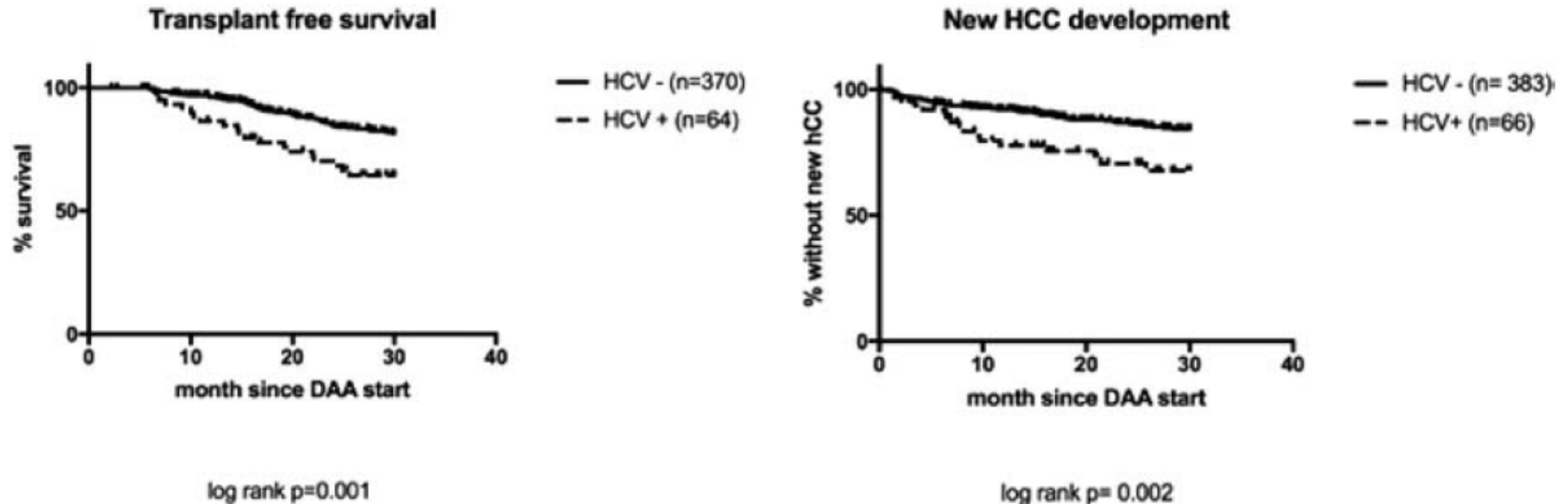
Fifty six patients treated with Resection(39%), Ablation(39%) or TA(C)E(21%)

HCC diagnosis : 21 months from HCC Tx and 9.3 months from DAA Tx

DFS = 75% at month 6 after DAA therapy and 56% at month 24 cumulatively.



U.K. Expanded Access Program to DAA of Patients with Decompensated HCV



Similar Rates of De-novo HCC in Patients With SVR to IFN and DAA. A Meta-analysis

Weaknesses of the meta-analysis by Waziry

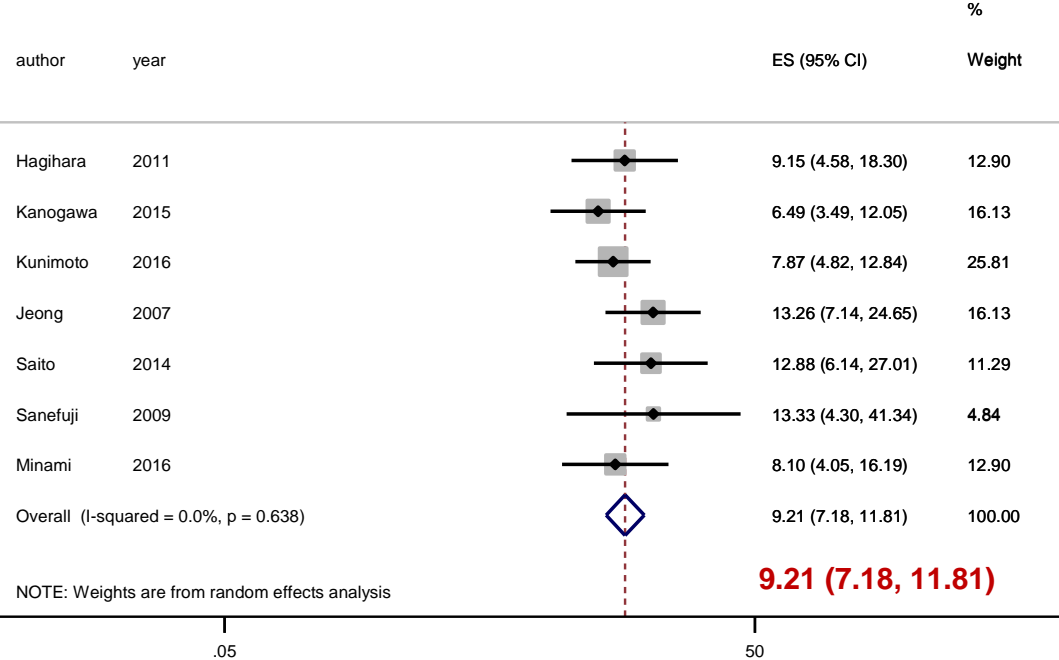
Heterogeneity : country of origin, design, sample size, inclusion criteria, baseline demography, schedules of treatment and surveillance, assessment of radiological response, tumour diagnosis and treatment.

Meta-analysis of individual data needed to overcome all referral biases

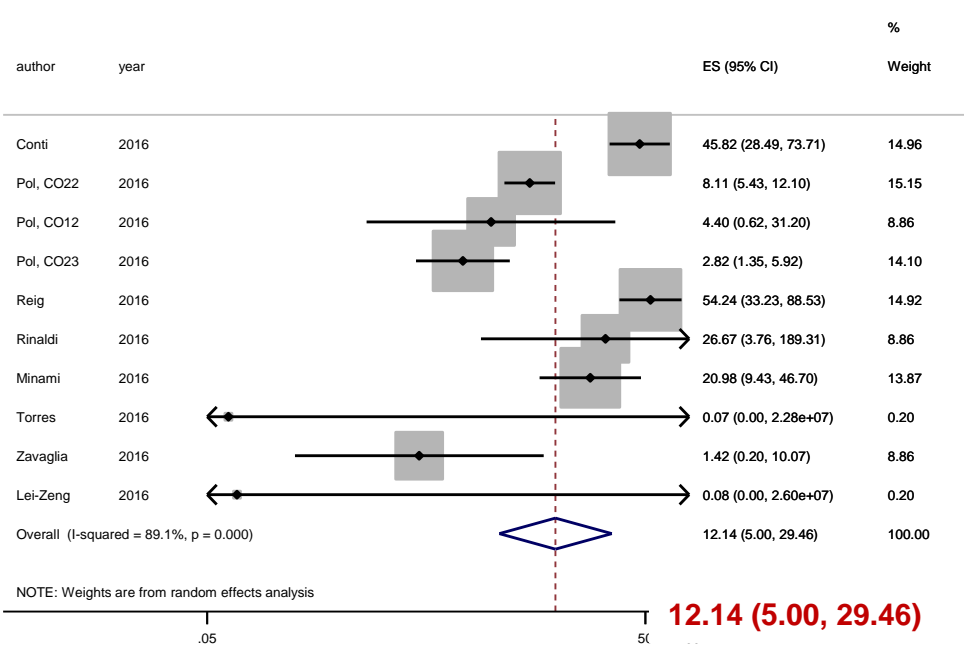
Camma C. et al J Hepatology 2018; 68 : 614–615

Similar Rates of Recurrence in Patients With an SVR to IFN and DAA. A Meta-analysis

IFN



DAA

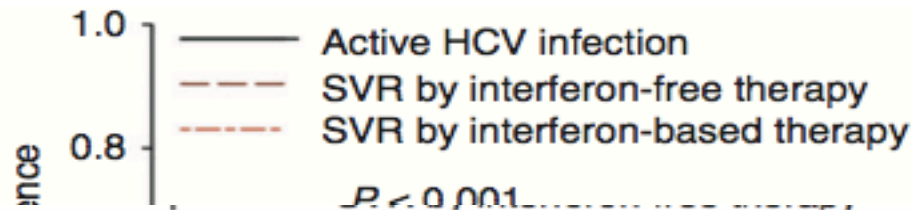


Meta regression of HCC recurrence

	RR non adjusted	RR adjusted	IC 95 %	P value
Average follow-up	0,86	0,79	0,55-1,15	0,19
Average Age	1,11	1,11	0,96-1,27	0,14
Treatment	1,36	0,62	0,11-3,45	0,56

HCC Recurrence in Patients with Curative Resection or Ablation.ITALICA Cohort

BCLC A/O patients with a HCC
62 yr IFN vs 66 yr DAA



	Groups		
	Active HCV infection (N = 328)	SVR by IFN-free therapies (N = 58)	SVR by IFN-based Therapies* (N = 57)
Recurrence during follow-up, n (%)	142 (43.3)	16 (27.6)	22 (38.6)
Follow-up length, median (range)	17 (1–95)	18 (3–90)	34 (0–138)
Recurrence rates			
6-month	9.5%	5.2%	3.7%
1-year	21.0%	12.9%	5.6%
2-year	40.6%	26.3%	15.2%
3-year	54.5%	33.5%	29.3%
4-year	60.7%	39.1%	41.1%
5-year	64.5%	39.1%	41.1%
Median time to recurrence, mo. (95% CI)	31 (26–38)	72.0 (40.8–N.A.)	82.3 (39.8–N.A.)
	328	202	115
	58	42	22
	57	50	41
	61	13	26
	32	8	19
	20	4	16
	8	4	14
	2	1	10
	0	0	6

Increased Recurrence of HCC After DAA Therapy

A Cohort Study in Egypt

- 53 patients , 8 mo. btwn HCC therapy and DAA , 37.7% recurrence after 16 mo.
- Adjusted rate ratio vs untreated : 3.8 (2.0 – 7.3) $p < 0.001$

