

Comment

We are presenting you with the Hepatology edition of our "Progress in Medicine" monthly. Over the recent years, rapid progress in treating diseases of the liver has been achieved, particularly as regards chronic hepatitis C infection. The prognosis associated with the treatment of HCV has improved spectacularly, with as much as 97-99% of patients now successfully treated. On the other hand, up to 80% of HCV-infected patients are not even aware of their disease. The main challenge, therefore, that remains to be addressed is now efficient screening. Effective treatment of HCV infection, i.e. achieving sustained virologic response (SVR), should be considered as complete eradication of HCV from the body. Direct-acting antivirals may also be used to treat patients with end-stage cirrhosis, a fact that may alter transplantology. It should be emphasised, however, that liver transplants remain the most efficient method of treating end-stage liver disease. For your consideration, this issue offers unique insight into the liver transplant programme in Upper Silesia run over the past 12 years. Advances in the management of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) are another important area that deserves attention, with HCC still being one of the most common cancers, and its treatment still leaving much to be desired. The article discussing the currently available and future modalities of HCC treatment certainly gives hope for better outcomes in a not-too-distant future. Autoimmune diseases of the liver, the pancreas and the bile ducts continue to pose considerable diagnostic challenges and raise frequent therapeutic concerns. It is our pleasure, therefore, to include in this edition a report that we hope you will find helpful in the diagnosis of these conditions in your day-to-day clinical practice.

Whatever your field of specialty, we trust you will find the current issue informative and inspiring, lending you a new perspective on the recent advances in the diagnostics and treatment of chronic diseases of the liver.

Best regards.

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