

Abstract:

BACKGROUND/AIM: Despite bearing the main burden of HCC, prospective studies from developing countries are lacking. This prospective observational study was designed to estimate the incidence of HCC among Indian patients with hepatic cirrhosis. **METHODS:** Between April 2001 and November 2004, we enrolled 301 patients with liver cirrhosis. Patients found to be free of HCC using baseline abdominal ultrasound, triple-phase computed tomography (TPCT) and serum alpha-fetoprotein (AFP) levels were followed up prospectively for detection of HCC using ultrasound and AFP every 6 months, and TPCT annually. **RESULTS:** Among the 194 patients (mean age [SD] 45.1 [+/-13.1] years; male:female 6.1:1.0) followed up, 154 had Child's A and 40 had Child's B disease. The causes of cirrhosis were: hepatitis B-71 (36.6%), hepatitis C-54 (27.8%), dual infection with hepatitis B and C-12 (6.2%) and others including autoimmune, alcoholic and cryptogenic cirrhosis 57 (29.4%). During a cumulative follow up period of 563.4 person-years, 9 cases of HCC were detected, with an incidence rate of 1.60 per 100 person-years. **CONCLUSION:** In our study, the incidence of HCC among patients with liver cirrhosis was intermediate, being lower than that in Japan but higher than that reported from Europe.