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LARGE NUMBER OF HEPATITIS B AND C PATIENTS ALSO LINE UP FOR TRANSPLANT, SAYS EXPERT

30% of liver transplant patients are alcoholics

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Alcohol is prohibited in Gujarat but everyone knows that liquor is freely available in the state. What's more, it is heavily consumed here, if figures of patients suffering from alcohol abuse and waiting for liver transplant are an indicator.

Explaining the situation, organising secretary of 'Liver Update 2011' and division chief of HPB and liver transplant programme at Sterling Hospitals, Dr Hitesh Chavda spoke to experts who gathered at the Ahmedabad Management Association (AMA) on September 10. He stated, "Nearly 30% cases of liver cancer and transplants or operations are of alcoholic patients. Surprisingly, the



Dr Hitesh Chavda

age group of these patients is in the range of 35-45 years. Most of them don't reach out for proper treatment because of ignorance or failure to tell a doctor their trouble. And when it ultimately comes to liver transplant, there is unavailability of donors."

The experts discussed advance therapies for treating liver cancer at the two-day event, disclosed that

currently there were around 8 patients waiting to be operated for seven months for the liver transplant surgery. Dr Chavda said, "Currently both private and public hospitals don't have any central registry to refer to with respect to the number of organ donors. Currently Sterling, Apollo and IKDR hospitals perform liver transplant surgeries. But we maintain our own records as there is no government monitored record or registry with regard to organ donors."

Dr Chavda says that at present a minimum of 20 liver transplant operations are being done in Gujarat on a monthly basis. He deals with nearly 10 such cases every month. Liver Update 2011 is the third

conference on liver surgery, organized by Gujarat Liver & Digestive Surgery Clinic (GLDSC) and Gujarat Liver Cancer Clinic (GLCC) in association with Sterling Hospitals. It is themed on 'Multidisciplinary Approach to Liver Cancer'.

Another problem that Dr Chavda pointed was that while the chunk of cases of liver cancers was due to Hepatitis B and C, another chunk was because of alcohol abuse.

'Liver Update 2011' will highlight the important aspects of surgical techniques and various novel therapeutic options for various liver malignancies. A special session will also provide insight into liver transplantation and its present role in the management of HCC & other liver tumours.

-Piyush Patel/DNA