

2022 Annual Update on Liver Disease

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UTSouthwestern
Medical Center

Alcohol-associated Liver Disease

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Disclosures

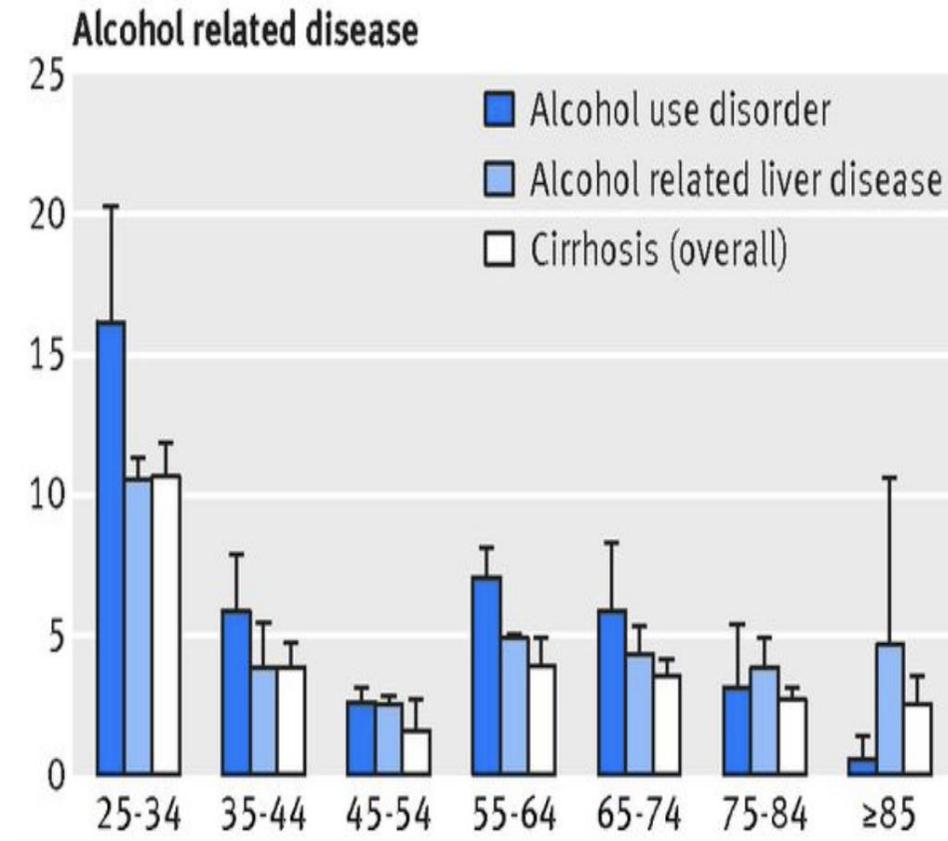
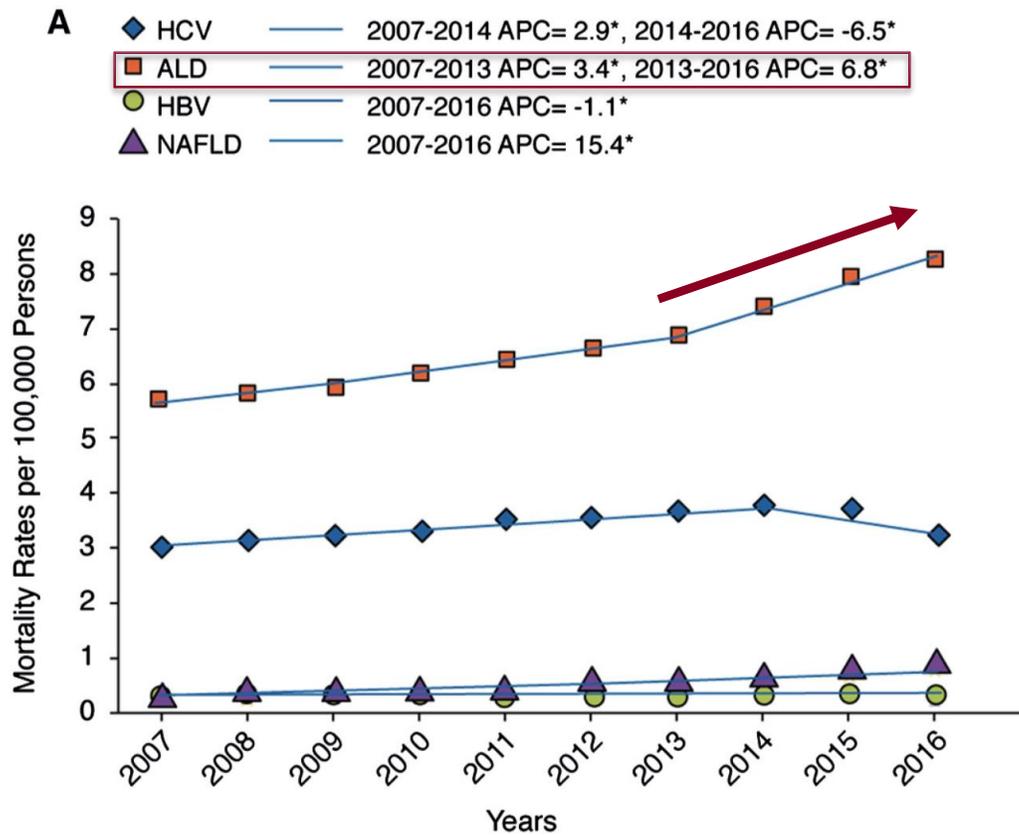
- I have no disclosures

Alcohol-associated Liver Disease (ALD)

- Epidemiology
- Pathophysiology
- Classification
- Management
- Future Directions

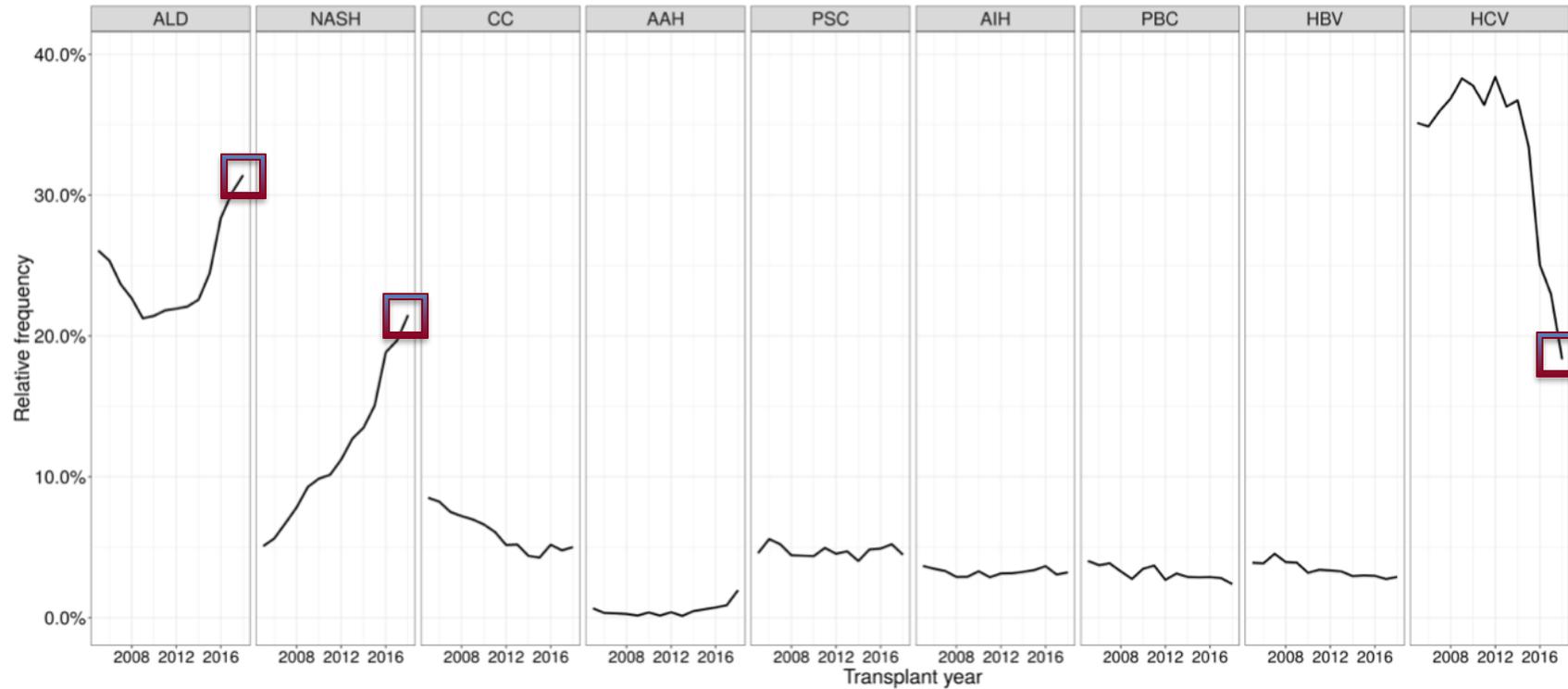
ALD - Epidemiology

- No. 1 cause of mortality from cirrhosis in the USA



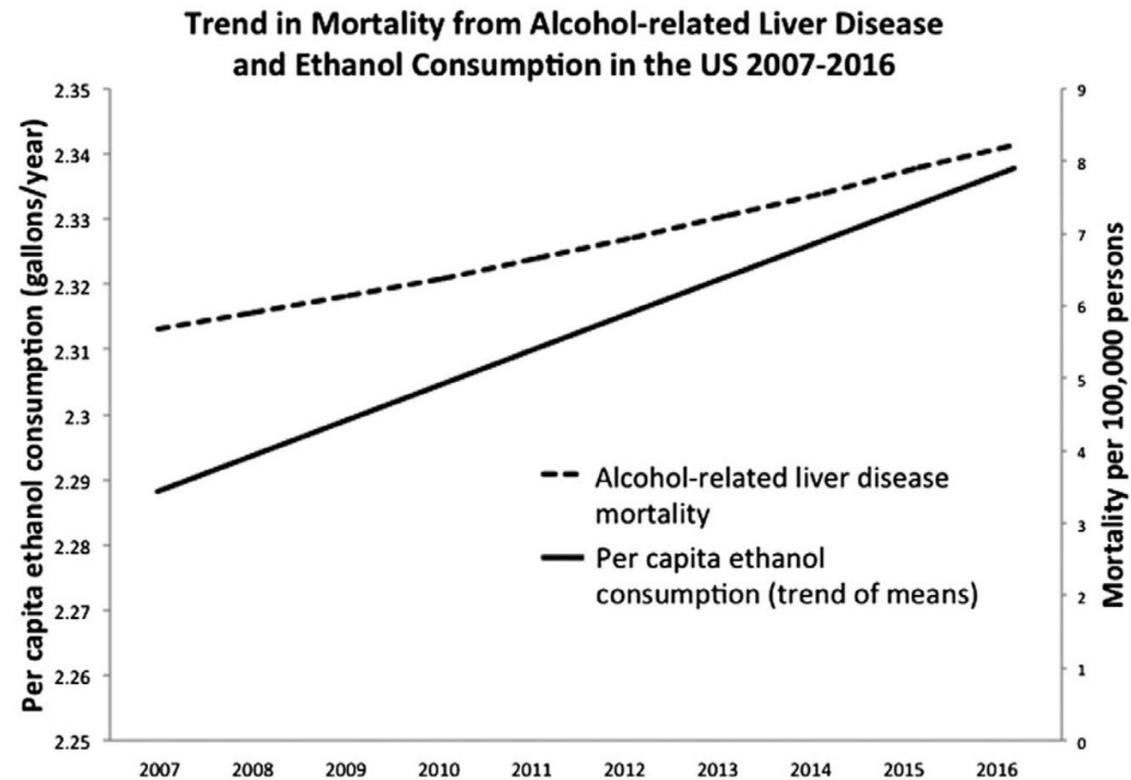
ALD - Epidemiology

- No. 1 indication for liver transplantation in the USA



ALD - Epidemiology

- Change in drinking habits partly responsible



ALD - Epidemiology

- COVID-19 exacerbation of alcohol-associated liver disease

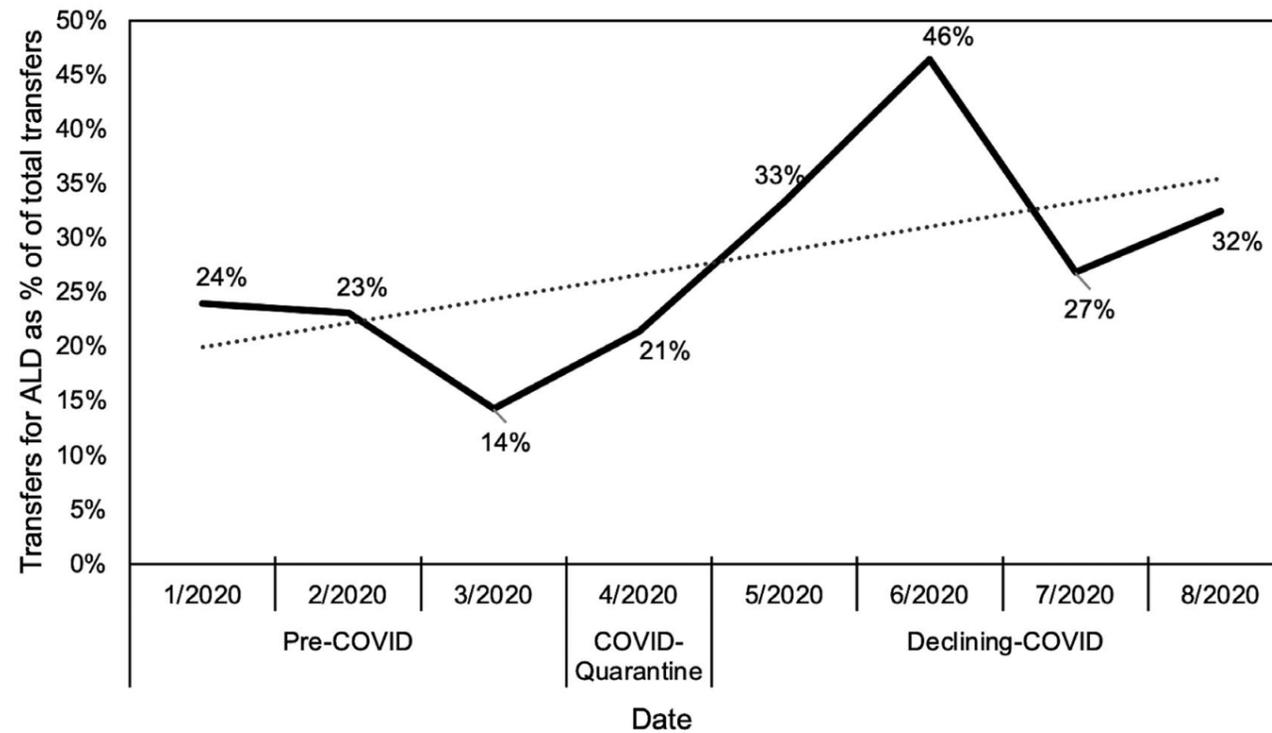
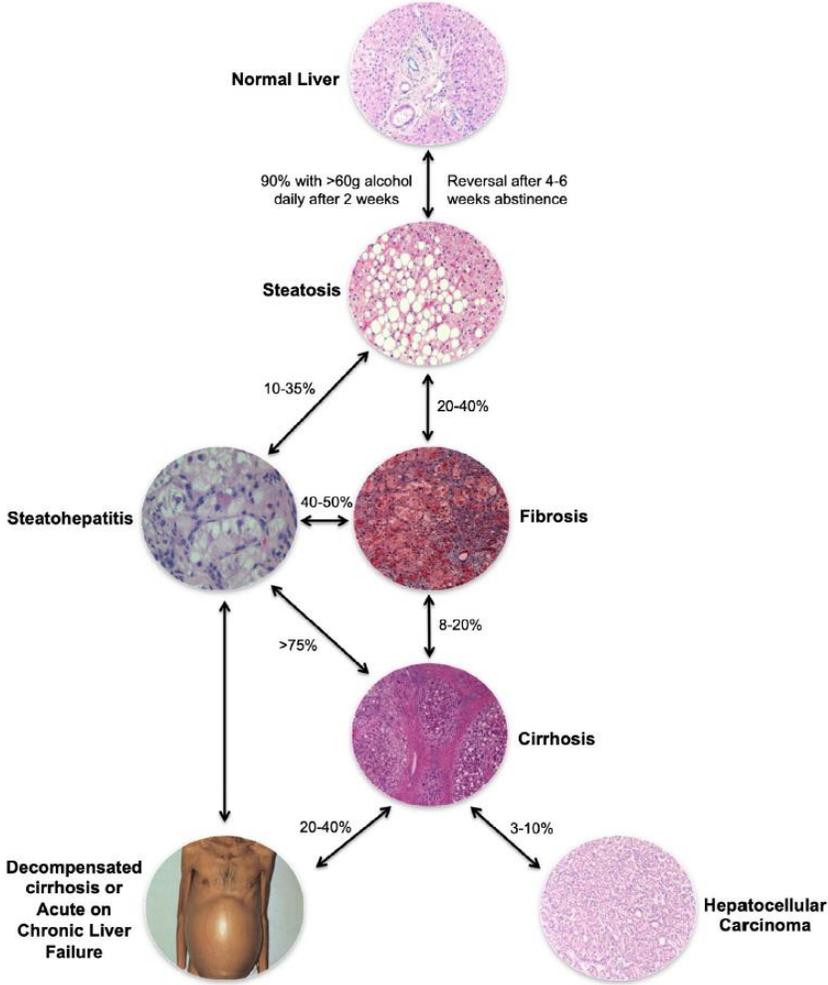


FIG. 1. Transfers for ALD as a percentage of total transfers in 2020.

ALD – Pathophysiology (Natural History)

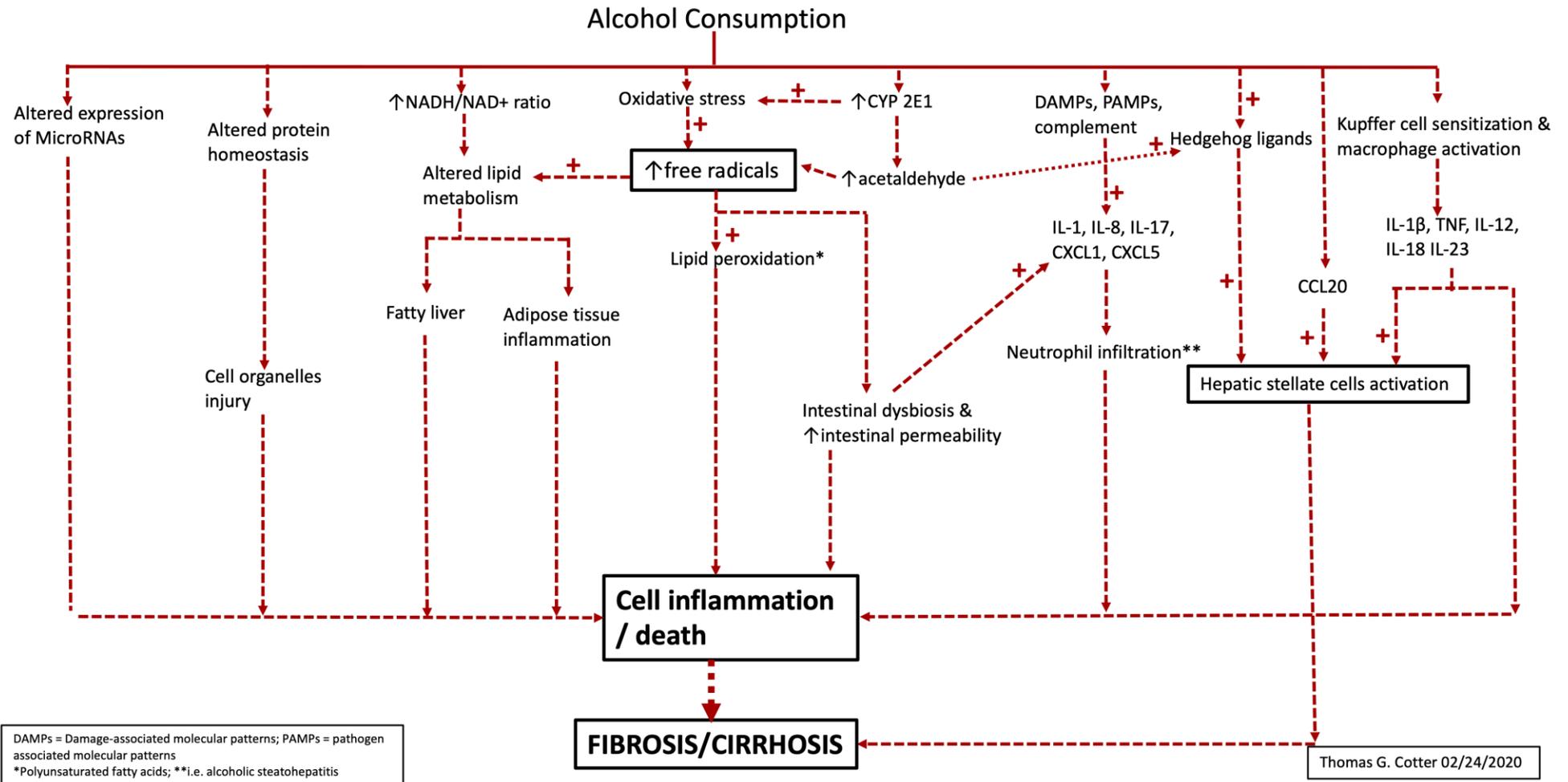


ALD - Pathophysiology

- Alcohol-associated liver inflammation and fibrosis is infrequent, even in heavy drinkers
- Similar pathogenesis with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (similar histology). Obesity increases the risk of alcohol-associated liver damage.
- Genetic risk factors, including polymorphisms in lipid droplet proteins are important, as well as likely other yet undetermined genes and environmental factors.

ALD - Pathophysiology

Overview of Proposed Mechanisms of Alcohol-Induced Liver Injury



ALD - Pathophysiology

- Dose-dependent relationship between alcohol and liver disease
- >30g of alcohol daily. Risky drinking (longer duration; binge drinking; drinking outside of meals). But we can't predict who is at risk

Alcohol intake (g/day)	No (n=6442)	NCLD (n=57)	Cirrhosis (n=35)	Multivariate analysis (odds ratio) (95% CI)	
				For NCLD ^a	For cirrhosis ^a
Teetotallers	2501 (99.9)	0 (0)	1 (0.04)	—	—
0.1–30	2666 (99.3)	13 (0.5)	4 (0.15)	— ^b	— ^b
→ 31–60	745 (97.2)	14 (1.8)	8 (1.0)	7.5 (3.5 to 15.9)	→ 10.9 (3.6 to 33.5)
61–90	276 (93.0)	14 (4.7)	7 (2.3)	20.2 (9.4 to 43.3)	25.0 (7.9 to 79.3)
91–120	132 (91.6)	5 (3.5)	7 (4.9)	15.1 (5.3 to 42.8)	52.9 (16.6 to 169)
>120	122 (86.5)	11 (7.8)	8 (5.7)	35.8 (15.7 to 81.6)	62.3 (20.1 to 193)

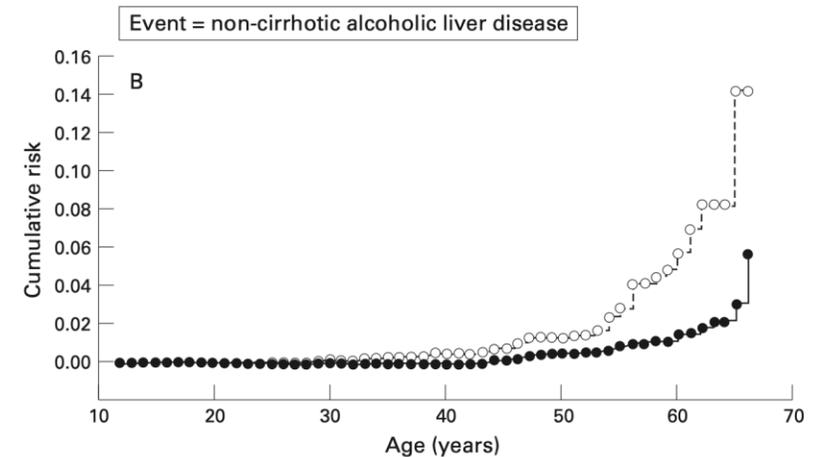
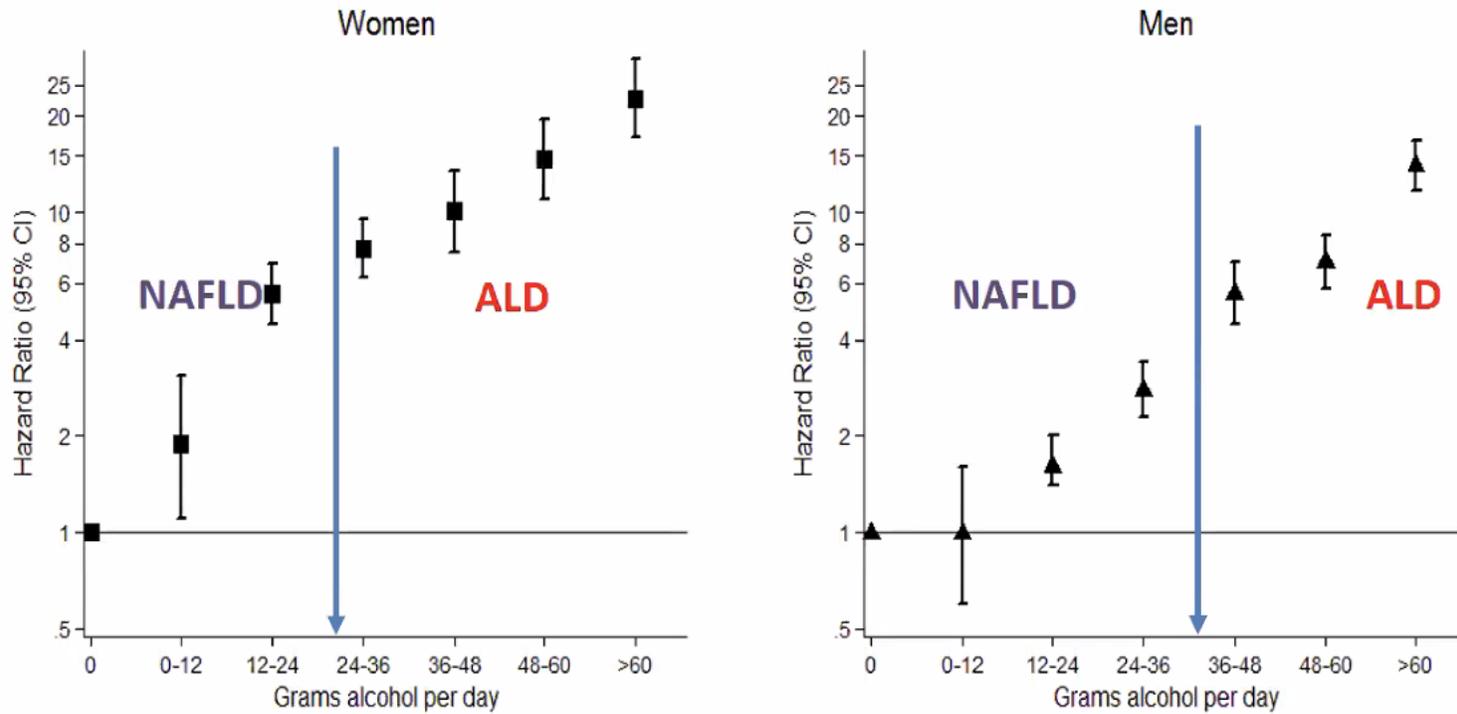


Figure 1: Cumulative hazard risk curves for the presence of non-cirrhotic alcohol induced liver disease (NCLD) (B) and cirrhosis or hepatocellular carcinoma (A) as a function of age and drinking pattern in subjects with an alcohol intake greater than 30 g/day. Patients drinking only at mealtimes (●) were compared with those drinking outside mealtimes as well (○). The difference in risk of developing either NCLD or cirrhosis or HCC between people drinking alcohol only at mealtimes and those drinking outside mealtimes as well, calculated using log rank and Breslow tests, was significant ($p < 0.001$).

ALD - Pathophysiology

- Increased risk of cirrhosis related to consumption of alcoholic beverages

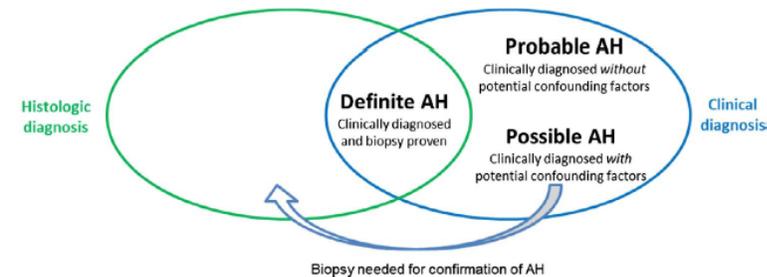


US National Recommendations on 'safe' alcohol consumption

- US HHS & USDA: upper limit = 1 standard drink (14g) daily for women; 2 standard drinks (28g) daily for men
- NIAAA: binge drinking = 4 drinks for women, 5 drinks for men (in ~2 hours)
(BAC 0.08 g/dL)

ALD - Classification

- Alcohol-associated steatosis: identified on US, CT or MRI of the liver. Absence of jaundice or stigmata of advanced liver disease. Reversible.
- Alcohol-associated cirrhosis: Observed on imaging or biopsy +/- portal hypertension. **Compensated vs. Decompensated** (jaundice, ascites, HE, HRS, variceal bleed).
- Alcohol-associated hepatitis



Clinical diagnosis of AH
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Onset of jaundice within prior 8 weeks• Ongoing consumption of >40 (female) or 60 (male) g alcohol/day for ≥6 months, with <60 days of abstinence before the onset of jaundice• AST >50, AST/ALT >1.5, and both values <400 IU/L• Serum total bilirubin >3.0 mg/dL
Potential confounding factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possible ischemic hepatitis (e.g., severe upper gastrointestinal bleed, hypotension, or cocaine use within 7 days) or metabolic liver disease (Wilson disease, alpha 1 antitrypsin deficiency)• Possible drug-induced liver disease (suspect drug within 30 days of onset of jaundice)• Uncertain alcohol use assessment (e.g., patient denies excessive alcohol use)• Presence of atypical laboratory tests (e.g., AST <50 or >400 IU/L, AST/ALT <1.5), ANA >1:160 or SMA >1:80.

ALD – Management (Alcohol Use Disorder)

- Alcohol use disorder (AUD): chronic, relapsing brain disorder.
- DSM-5: 2 or more indicates AUD:
 1. Had times when you ended up drinking more, or longer, than you intended?
 2. More than once wanted to cut down or stop drinking, or tried to, but couldn't?
 3. Spent a lot of time drinking? Or being sick or getting over other aftereffects?
 4. Wanted a drink so badly you couldn't think of anything else?
 5. Found that drinking—or being sick from drinking—often interfered with taking care of your home or family?
 6. Continued to drink even though it was causing trouble with your family or friends?
 7. Given up or cut back on activities that were important to you, or gave you pleasure, in order to drink?
 8. More than once gotten into situations while or after drinking that increased your chances of getting hurt?
 9. Continued to drink even though it was making you feel depressed or anxious?
 10. Had to drink much more than you once did to get the effect you want?
 11. Found that when the effects of alcohol were wearing off, you had withdrawal symptoms?

>15 million US adults (5.6%).

ALD – Management (Alcohol Use Disorder)

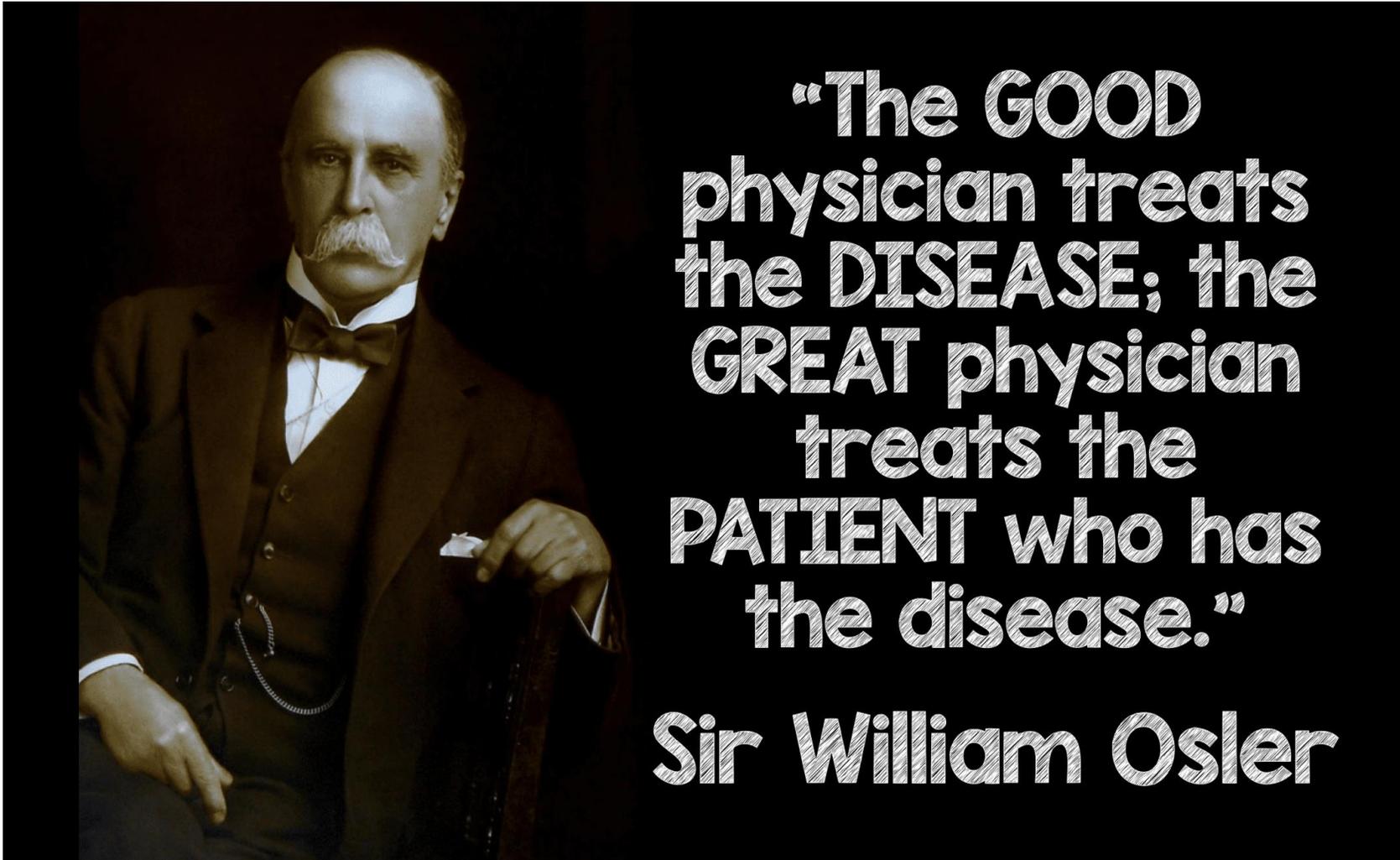
- Motivational interviewing ✓
- 12-step facilitation (AA) ✓
- Cognitive behavioral therapy ✓
- Contingency management ✓
- Mindfulness-based intervention ✓
- Couples-based / family therapy ✓
- Continuing care ↔

- Acamprosate ✓
- Naltrexone (po or s/c) ✓
- Disulfiram ↔
- Baclofen ✓

ALD – Management (Alcohol Use Disorder)

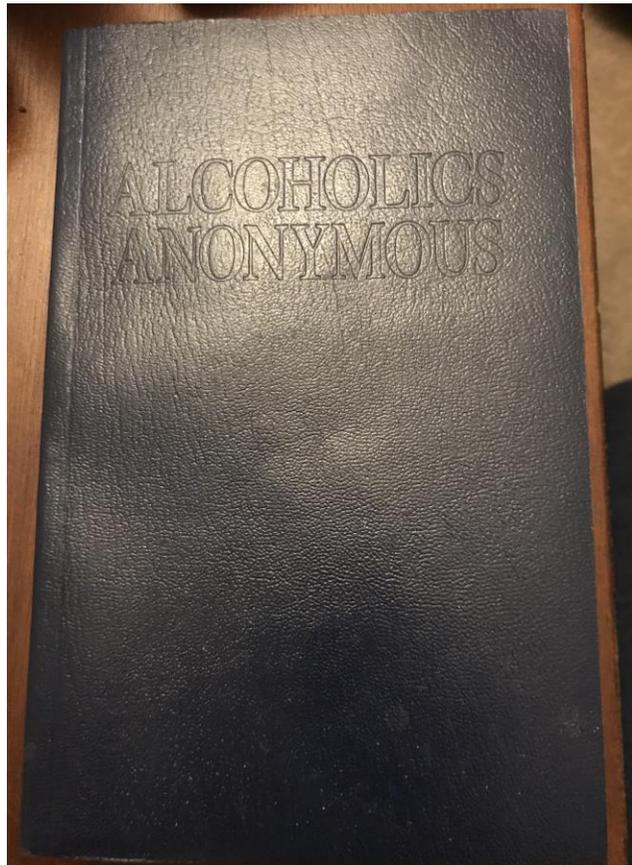
Drug	Mechanism of action	Dosage	FDA-Approved	Evidence	Comments
Acamprosate	?NMDA receptor agonist	666mg three times daily	Yes	NNT 12	Renally excreted
Naltrexone	Mu opiate receptor antagonist	Oral: 50mg daily IM: 480 mg q 4 wks	Yes	Oral: NNT 20 IM: Reduction in heavy drinking days	Opioid-free prior to initiation. Hepatically metabolized.
Baclofen	GABA _B receptor agonist	5mg TID, & uptitrate q 3-5 days (Max 45mg daily)	No	68-71% vs 24-29% placebo rates for abstinence	Can lower seizure thresholds. Studied in advanced liver disease
Disulfiram	Inhibition of acetaldehyde dehydrogenase	250-500mg daily	Yes	Not efficacious (?excellent adherence)	12 hours of abstinence. Black box (hepatotoxicity)

ALD – Management (Alcohol Use Disorder)



ALD – Management (Alcohol Use Disorder)

- Alcoholics' Anonymous



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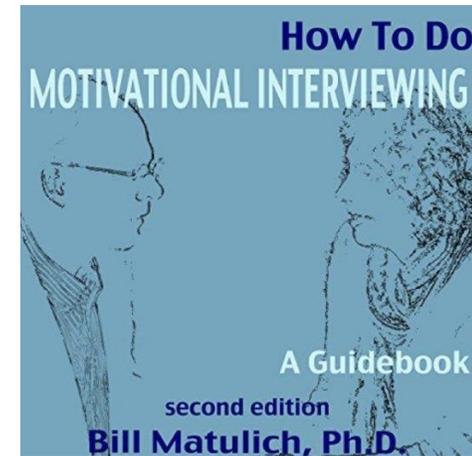
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ALD – Management (Alcohol Use Disorder)

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

ALD – Management (Alcohol Use Disorder)

- Motivational interviewing
- Aims:
 - Reduce resistance
 - Explore discrepancy between behavior and goals (i.e. resolve ambivalence)
 - Open questions, affirmation, reflective listening, and summary reflections (OARS)
 - Elicit “change talk”



ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd cirrhosis)

- Risk stratification: Child-Pugh Score

Child-Pugh Score for Cirrhosis Mortality ☆

Estimates cirrhosis severity.

Pearls/Pitfalls ^

The Child-Pugh Score can be useful in the prognosis of patients with cirrhosis, but more recent scores like the MELD score and MELD-Na have become more used given their better prognostic value.

Bilirubin (Total)	<2 mg/dL (<34.2 μmol/L)	+1
	2-3 mg/dL (34.2-51.3 μmol/L)	+2
	>3 mg/dL (>51.3 μmol/L)	+3
Albumin	>3.5 g/dL (>35 g/L)	+1
	2.8-3.5 g/dL (28-35 g/L)	+2
	<2.8 g/dL (<28 g/L)	+3
INR	<1.7	+1
	1.7-2.2	+2
	>2.2	+3
Ascites	Absent	+1
	Slight	+2
	Moderate	+3
Encephalopathy <small>See encephalopathy grades in Evidence > Facts & Figures</small>	No Encephalopathy	+1
	Grade 1-2	+2
	Grade 3-4	+3

	Class A	Class B	Class C
Total points	5-6	7-9	10-15
1-year survival	100%	80%	45%

ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd cirrhosis)

- Risk stratification: MELD score

MELD Score (Model For End-Stage Liver Disease) (12 and older) ☆

Stratifies severity of end-stage liver disease, for transplant planning.

INSTRUCTIONS

Use in patients ≥12 years old. Note: As of January 2016, calculation of the MELD has changed. It now includes serum sodium level. See [OPTN's announcement](#).

When to Use ▾	Pearls/Pitfalls ▾	Why Use ▾
Dialysis at least twice in the past week Or CVVHD for ≥24 hours in the past week	No	Yes
Creatinine Cr >4.0 mg/dL is automatically assigned a value of 4.0	Norm: 0.7 - 1.3	mg/dL ↗
Bilirubin	Norm: 0.3 - 1.9	mg/dL ↗
INR	Norm: 1 - 2	
Sodium	Norm: 136 - 145	mEq/L ↗

FORMULA

Per [OPTN policy, January 2016 \(pages 4–5\)](#):

Candidates who are at least 12 years old receive an initial MELD(i) score equal to:

$$\text{MELD}(i) = 0.957 \times \ln(\text{Cr}) + 0.378 \times \ln(\text{bilirubin}) + 1.120 \times \ln(\text{INR}) + 0.643$$

Then, round to the tenth decimal place and multiply by 10.

If MELD(i) > 11, perform additional MELD calculation as follows:

$$\text{MELD} = \text{MELD}(i) + 1.32 \times (137 - \text{Na}) - [0.033 \times \text{MELD}(i) \times (137 - \text{Na})]$$

Additional rules:

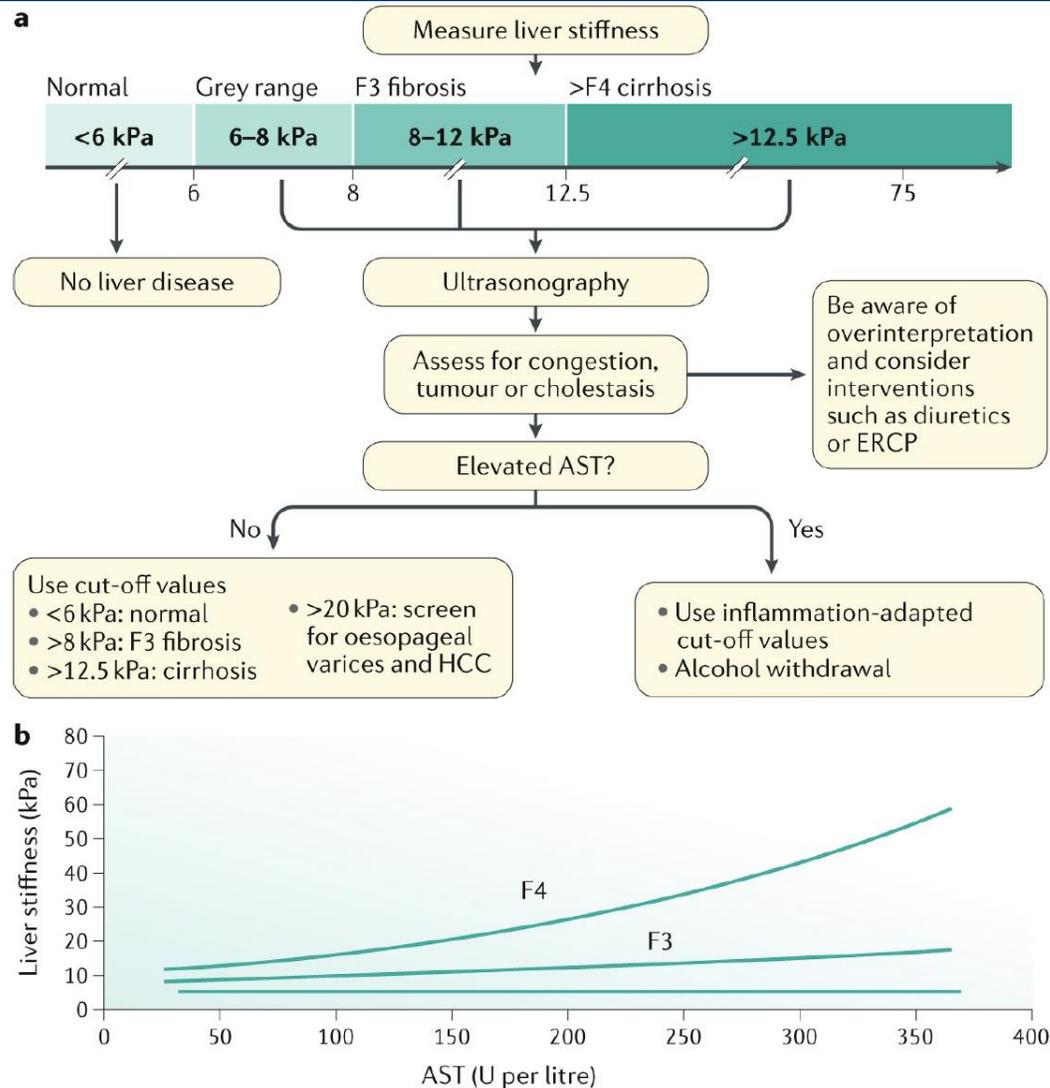
- All values in US units (Cr and bilirubin in mg/dL, Na in mEq/L, and INR unitless).
- If bilirubin, Cr, or INR is <1.0, use 1.0.
- If any of the following is true, use Cr 4.0:
 - Cr >4.0.
 - ≥2 dialysis treatments within the prior 7 days.
 - 24 hours of continuous veno-venous hemodialysis (CVVHD) within the prior 7 days.
- If Na <125 mmol/L, use 125. If Na >137 mmol/L, use 137.
- Maximum MELD = 40.

FACTS & FIGURES

Interpretation:

MELD Score	Mortality
≤9	1.9%
10–19	6.0%
20–29	19.6%
30–39	52.6%
≥40	71.3%

ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd cirrhosis)



ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd cirrhosis)

- Treatment
 - Abstinence (AUD mgt)
 - MELD score 15 or above, or significant decompensation - liver transplantation evaluation
 - Standard cirrhosis management (Volume, Infection, Bleeding, Encephalopathy, Screening)
 - Nutrition, physical therapy

ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd hepatitis)

■ Risk Stratification

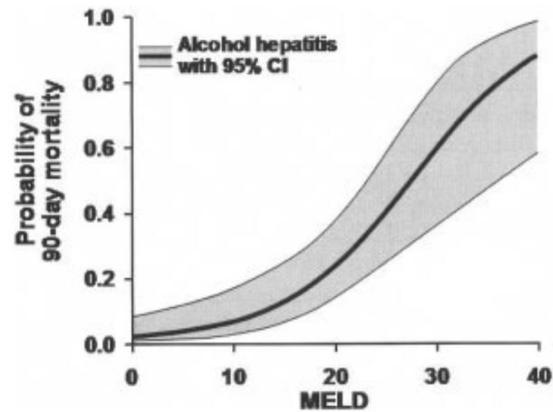


Fig. 1. Prediction of 90-day mortality in patients with AH based on MELD. The curve demonstrates probability of 90-day mortality in AH for given MELD (**black line**) with confidence intervals (**gray shading**). The probability of 90-day mortality in AH was calibrated using the data from logistic regression ($P = e^{(-4.3 + 0.16 \times \text{MELD})} / [1 + e^{(-4.3 + 0.16 \times \text{MELD})}]$). MELD, model for end-stage liver disease.

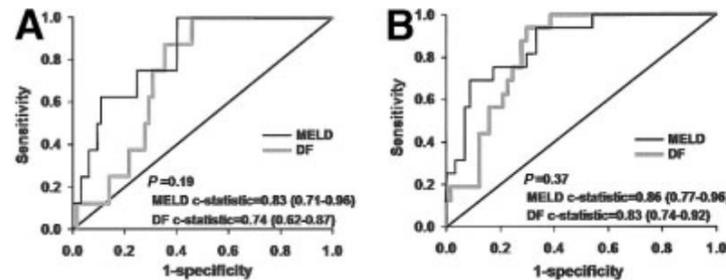


Fig. 2. Comparison of MELD and DF in predicting mortality in AH. Receiver operating characteristic curves and c-statistics were generated to compare MELD (**black curve**) and DF (**gray curve**) in predicting mortality rate in AH. Respective c-statistics and confidence intervals are indicated. MELD and DF were comparable regarding prediction of (A) 30-day mortality and (B) 90-day mortality ($P > .05$). MELD, model for end-stage liver disease; DF, Maddrey discriminant function; c-statistic, concordance statistic.

TABLE 8. Advantages and Disadvantages of Lab-Based Prognostic Scores in Alcoholic Hepatitis

	Advantages	Disadvantages
MDF	Decades of experience in AH Key inclusion criterion in most AH trials	False positives can lead to excess corticosteroid treatment
MELD	Extensive experience in hepatology	Uncertain threshold for initiating corticosteroids
ABIC	Three-tiered stratification	Uncertain threshold for initiating corticosteroids and not verified outside of Spain
GAHS	Improves specificity of patients with MDF ≥ 32 needing corticosteroids	Not verified outside of United Kingdom
Lille	Allows early cessation of corticosteroids	Uncertain decision making with partial response (Lille 0.46-0.56)

ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd hepatitis)

- Lille score: to assess steroid response

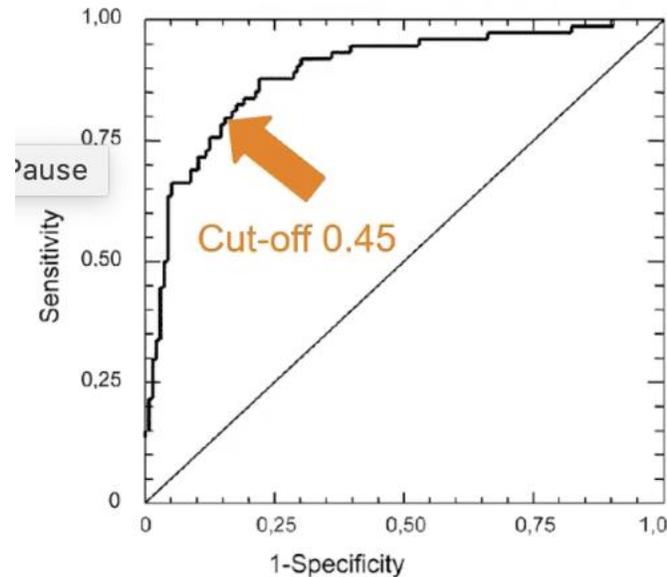
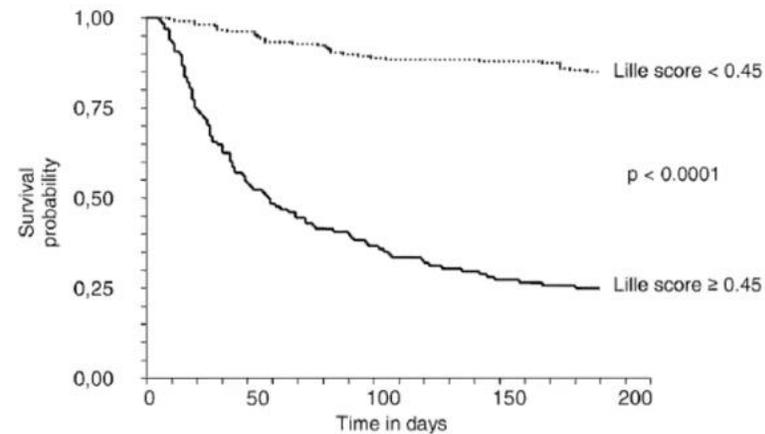


Fig. 1. Receiver operating characteristic curve for survival at 6 months in the exploratory cohort using the Lille model.



www.lillemodel.com

$$R = 3.19 - (0.101 \times \text{Age}) + (0.0165 \times \text{Difference in bilirubin D0-D7 in } \mu\text{mol/l}) + (0.147 \times \text{Albumin D0}) \\ - (0.206 \times \text{Renal Insufficiency}) - (0.0065 \times \text{Bilirubin D0 in } \mu\text{mol/l}) - (0.0096 \times \text{PT in seconds})$$

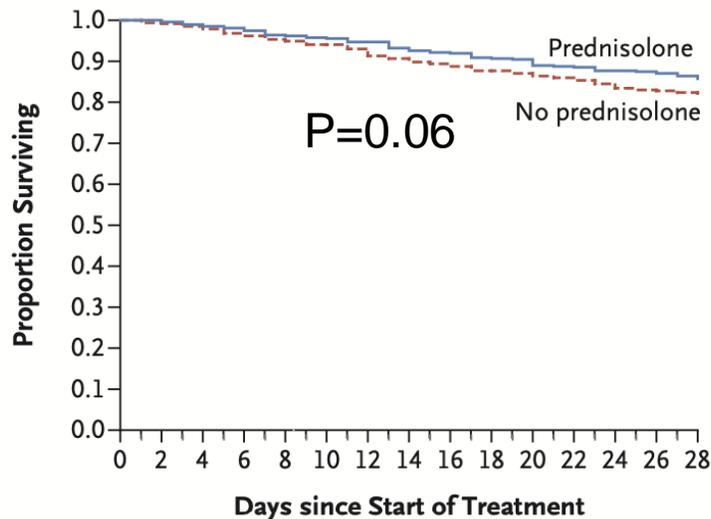
ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd hepatitis)

- Treatment:
 - Abstinence
 - Prednisolone 40 mg once daily for 4 weeks (rule out infection, GI bleed hemostasis)
 - Nutrition

ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd hepatitis)

- Steroids - STOPAH trial
 - Power calculation = 28-day mortality rate at the margins from 30% (placebo) to 21% (treatment). Actual study: 28-day mortality = 17% in placebo

A Prednisolone vs. No Prednisolone



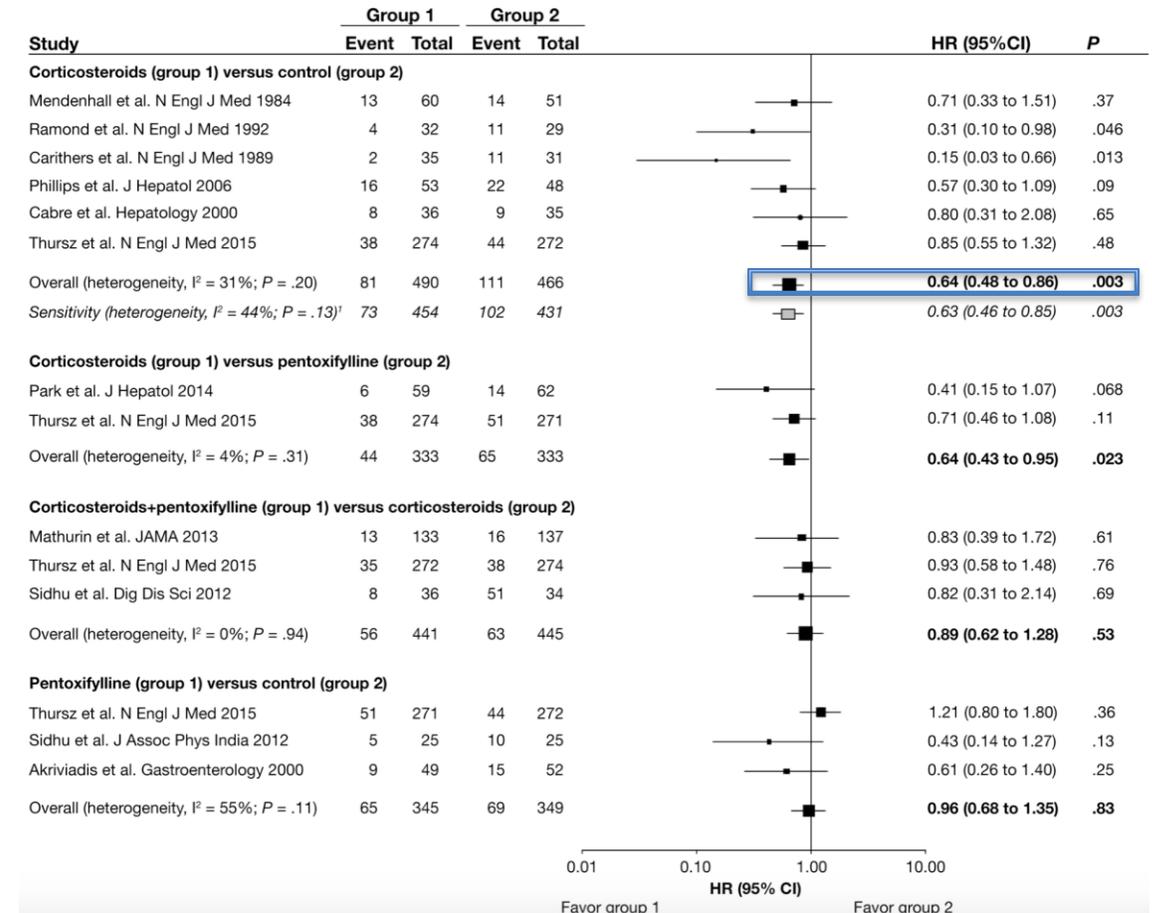
No. at Risk					
Prednisolone	543	514	483	459	427
No prednisolone	546	523	494	468	450

Table 3. Analysis of Factors Associated with Mortality at 28 Days.*

Variable	Univariate Analysis†		Multivariate Analysis‡	
	Odds Ratio (95% CI)	P Value	Odds Ratio (95% CI)	P Value
Prednisolone vs. no prednisolone			0.61 (0.41–0.91)	0.02
Pentoxifylline vs. no pentoxifylline			1.10 (0.74–1.64)	0.62
Discriminant function	1.02 (1.02–1.03)	<0.001		
GAHS	2.17 (1.86–2.53)	<0.001		
MELD	1.15 (1.12–1.18)	<0.001		
Lille§	1.03 (1.02–1.03)	<0.001		
Prothrombin ratio or INR	1.38 (1.10–1.73)	0.005	1.38 (1.13–1.69)	0.002
Age	1.05 (1.03–1.07)	<0.001	1.05 (1.03–1.07)	<0.001
White cells	1.06 (1.03–1.08)	<0.001	1.03 (1.00–1.06)	0.04
Urea	1.14 (1.10–1.18)	<0.001	1.06 (1.01–1.12)	0.01
Creatinine	3.07 (2.32–4.08)	<0.001	1.56 (1.05–2.33)	0.03
Pyrexia	0.66 (0.37–1.16)	0.15		
Hypotension	1.20 (0.79–1.83)	0.39		
Tachycardia	1.09 (0.71–1.65)	0.70		
Alcohol intake	1.00 (1.00–1.00)	0.37		
Albumin	0.99 (0.96–1.02)	0.41		
Alkaline phosphatase	1.00 (1.00–1.00)	0.07		
Bilirubin	1.07 (1.05–1.09)	<0.001	1.03 (1.01–1.06)	0.003
Hepatic encephalopathy	3.70 (2.59–5.29)	<0.001	3.07 (2.05–4.60)	<0.001

ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd hepatitis)

- 11 RCTs:
 - Steroids > control: 36% mortality decrease over 28 days
 - No difference in 3- and 6-month survival
 - Not studied in severe renal failure
 - Pentoxifylline inefficient, alone or with steroids



ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd hepatitis)

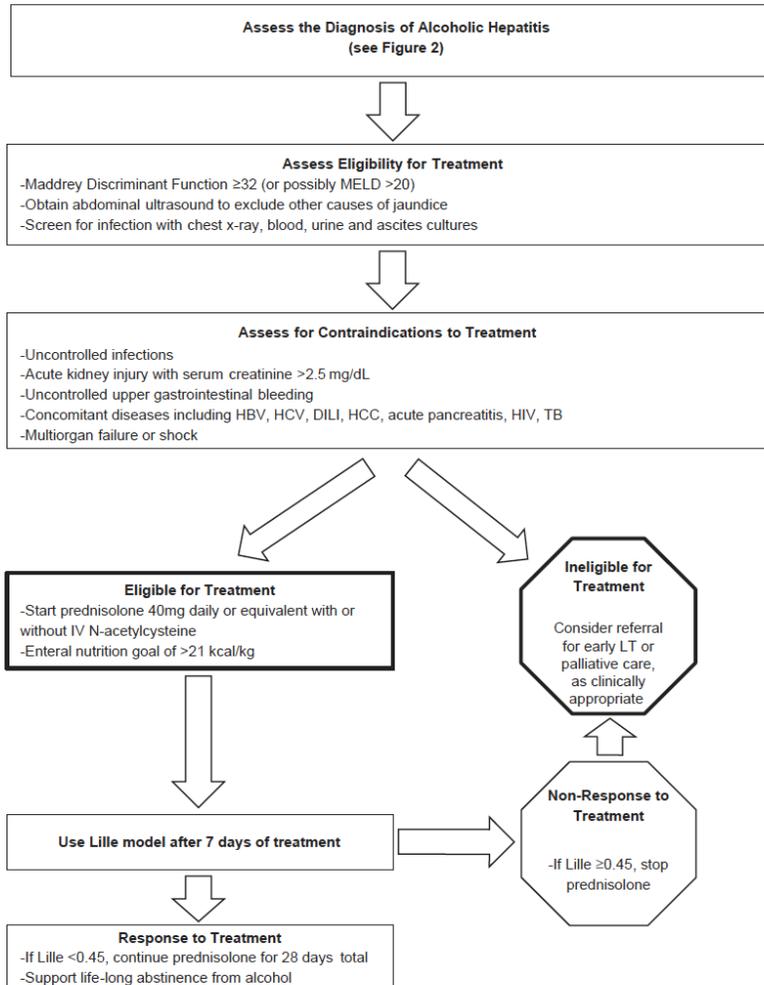


FIG. 3. Assessment of patients with alcoholic hepatitis likely to benefit from treatment with corticosteroids. Abbreviations: DILI, drug-induced liver injury; HBV, hepatitis B virus; HIV, human immunodeficiency virus; and TB, tuberculosis.

ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd hepatitis)

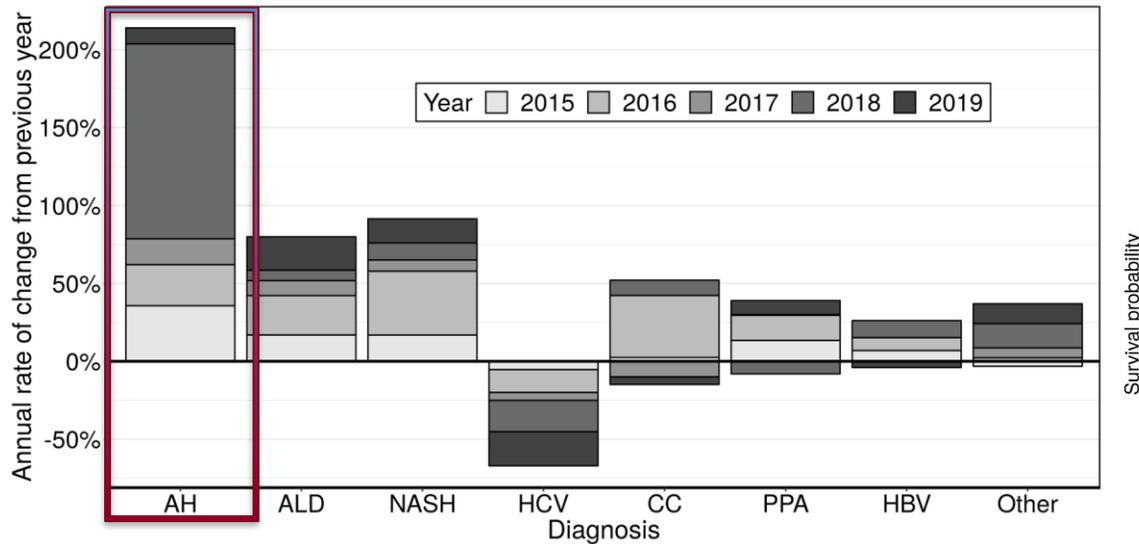
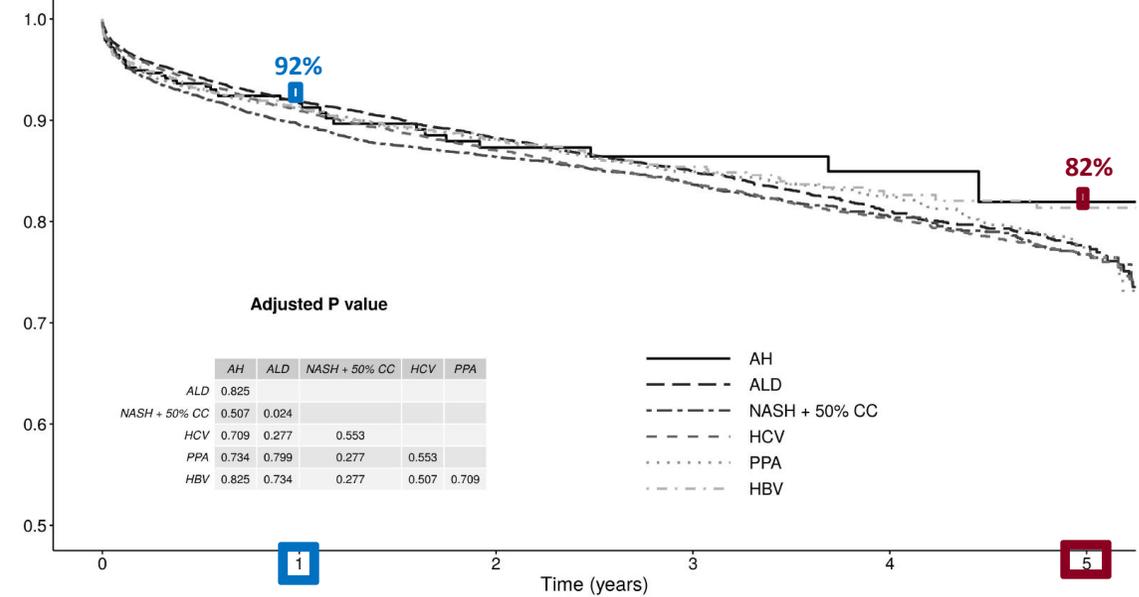


Figure 1: Annual rate change (%) in deceased-donor liver transplantation by primary listing indication from 2014 to 2019. There has been a 5-fold increase in alcoholic hepatitis cases over this time frame, but the rate of change slowed down to only 10% from 2018 to 2019. (Abbreviations: AH: Alcoholic Hepatitis; ALD: Alcohol-related Liver Disease; CC: Cryptogenic Cirrhosis; HBV: Hepatitis B Virus infection; HCV: Hepatitis C Virus infection; NASH: Non-Alcoholic Steatohepatitis; PPA: Primary Biliary Cholangitis / Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis / Autoimmune Hepatitis.)



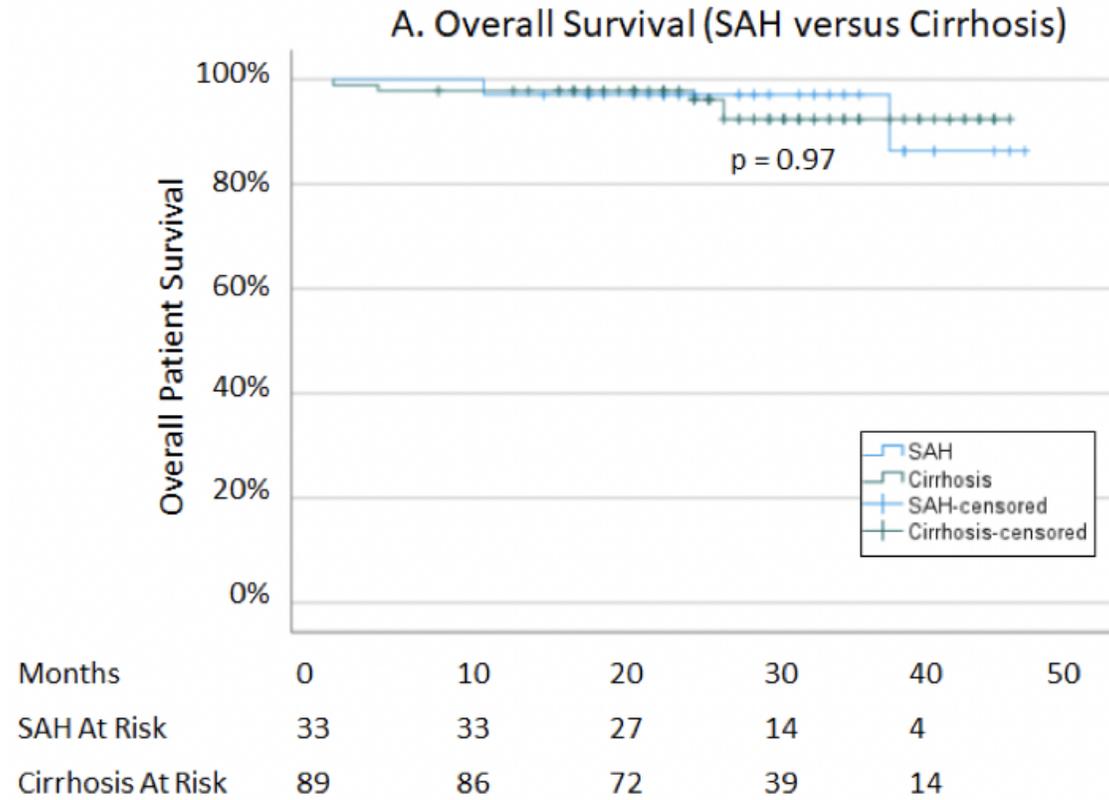
ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd hepatitis)

- UT Southwestern Medical Center early LT criteria for AH:

1. First episode of AH.
2. Addiction Psychiatry evaluation.
3. Acceptable social support and insight (Social Worker and/or psychological assessment).
4. Written commitment to engage in post-liver transplant alcohol counseling.
5. If history of psychiatric disease, Psychologist or Psychiatrist evaluation.
6. No current abuse of other substances.

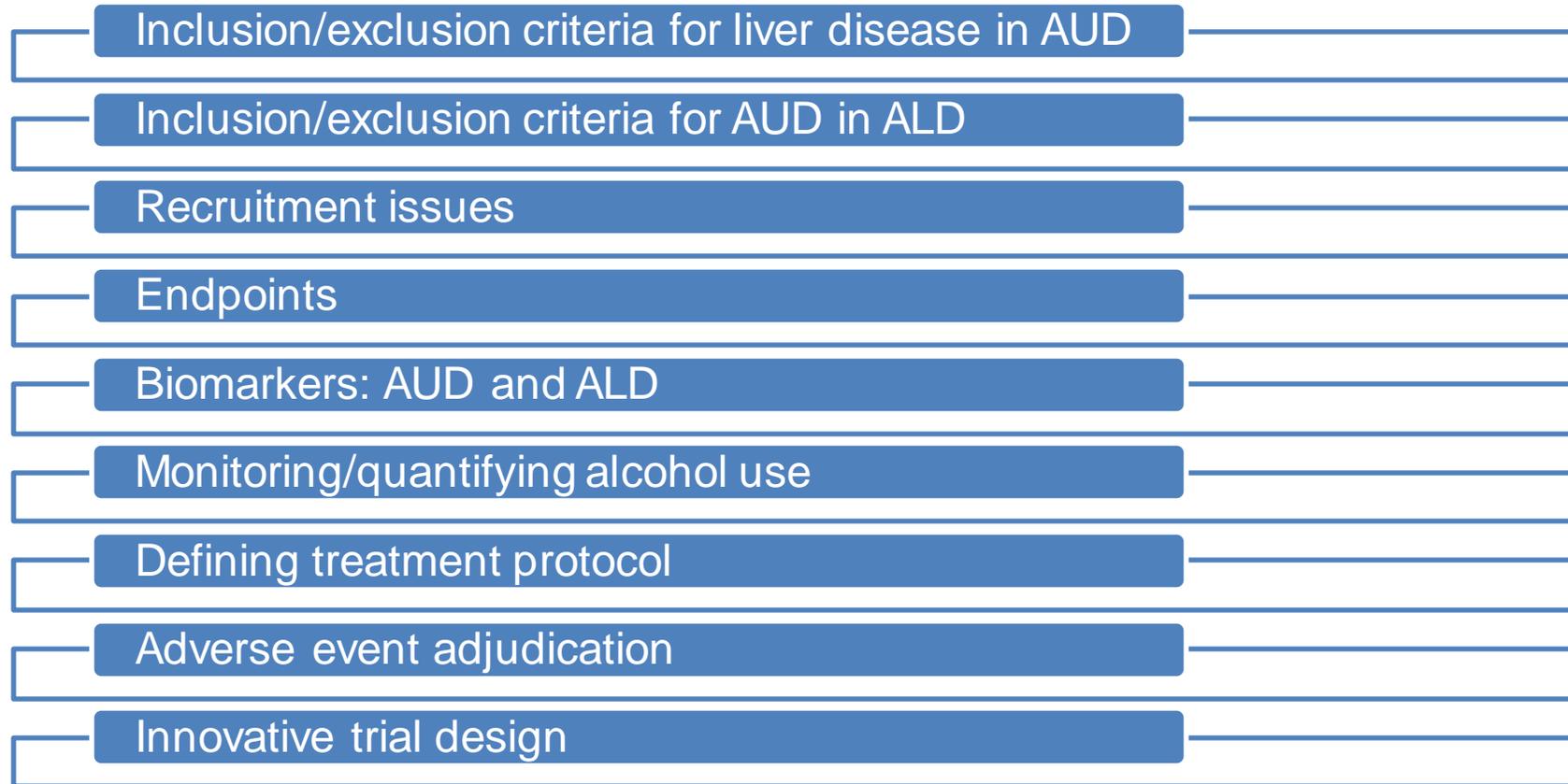
ALD – Management (alcohol-ass'd hepatitis)

- UT Southwestern Medical Center early LT for AH outcomes:



ALD – Future Directions

- NIAAA: Improving integrated care for AUD-ALD patients



THANK YOU!



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