

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH IN HEPATIC EN-
CEPHALOPATHY: NEW DIAGNOSTIC POSSIBI-
LITIES AND NEW THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES

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Focal points:

- **Benchside**

The mechanisms underlying cognitive and motor alterations in minimal hepatic encephalopathy (MHE) are beginning to be clarified in animal models. A number of therapeutic targets have been identified to improve cognitive and motor function in MHE. Also, serum level of 3-nitrotyrosine is the first peripheral biomarker identified for diagnosis of MHE in cirrhotic patients, with high diagnostic accuracy, high sensitivity and specificity.

- **Bedside:**

In the European Union more than 2 million patients with liver cirrhosis show MHE with mild cognitive impairment. MHE is an important, until now underestimated, health, social and economic problem. Early diagnosis and treatment of MHE will significantly improve quality of life and life span of the patients and reduce costs of hospitalization and treatment

- **Industry**

There are no specific treatments for the neurological alterations in MHE. A number of therapeutic targets have been identified in animal models to improve cognitive and motor function in MHE. This is a new market waiting for development of appropriate therapeutic treatments which would improve quality of life and survival of patients. Development of a kit for diagnosis of MHE in clinical practice is pending.

- **Governments - Regulatory Agencies**

Early diagnosis and treatment of MHE will significantly improve quality of life and life span of the patients and reduce costs of hospitalization and treatment. Screening of the presence of MHE in patients with liver diseases will reduce costs.

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