

Diabetes drug may prevent liver cancer

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A drug commonly used to treat type 2 diabetes might help prevent patients from developing liver cancers.

In a study published this month in the journal *Cancer Causes & Control*, Harvey J. Murff, MD, MPH, and colleagues found that patients taking [metformin](#) had a reduced rate of liver cancer compared to patients

taking an alternative anti-diabetes drug.

While other previous studies have found associations between metformin and decreased risk of several cancer types, most of them have been impacted by biases related to differences in treatment time between cases and controls, as well as confounding factors such as [body mass index](#) and glycemic control.

The authors carefully controlled for these factors in a study of patients with diabetes included in national Veterans Health Administration databases. They found no association between metformin use and the incidence of 10 solid tumor types—other than liver cancer.

Their work suggests that metformin should be further studied clinically for the prevention of [liver cancer](#).

More information: Harvey J. Murff et al. Metformin use and incidence cancer risk: evidence for a selective protective effect against liver cancer, *Cancer Causes & Control* (2018). [DOI: 10.1007/s10552-018-1058-4](#)

Provided by Vanderbilt University

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