

NEW DATES ABOUT HEPATOPULMONARY SYNDROME

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Hepato-pulmonary syndrome can be defined as the association of hepatic dysfunction (most commonly cirrhosis), arterio-venous oxygen difference increase and pulmonary vascular dilatation. The main cause of this syndrome is portal hypertension, but the pathology is yet poorly understood, although some attempts in explaining the intimate process that occurs in this issue have been made. Several hepatic mediators may be incriminated in the pulmonary dysfunction. Regarding the therapy, oxygen in high concentration is known to produce clinical improvement, but the only therapeutic strategy able to cure the disease is liver transplantation. Some attempts to treat the syndrome using antagonists of the substances believed to play a role in hepato-pulmonary syndrome genesis have also been made.