

# Suprahepatic vein oxygen tension in alcoholics with severe and mild liver damage

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We measured suprahepatic vein and arterial partial oxygen pressure in 35 alcoholics with severe (N=7) or mild (N=28) histological liver damage and without evidence of clinical liver failure. The suprahepatic vein was punctured with a fine needle, using a percutaneous approach. Suprahepatic vein partial oxygen pressure was lower and arterial-suprahepatic gradient higher in alcoholics with severe liver damage compared to those with mild damage ( $35.1 \pm 1.7$  vs  $44.1 \pm 2.1$  and  $58.9 \pm 3.7$  vs  $45.9 \pm 2.4$  mm Hg, respectively;  $P < 0.001$ ). Suprahepatic puncture was well tolerated and devoid of complications. It is concluded that alcoholics with severe liver damage have lower oxygen tensions in the suprahepatic vein, a phenomenon that supports the hypoxic theory of alcoholic liver disease.

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