

Porphyrin excretion in patients with chronic hepatitis C virus infection Excreción de porfirinas e infección crónica por virus G de la hepatitis

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Background: The high prevalence of chronic hepatitis C virus infection in patients with porphyria cutanea tarda, specially in those without family history of the disease, suggests that this could be an acquired disease and one of the most frequent extra hepatic manifestations of hepatitis C virus infection. **Aim:** To study the excretion of porphyrins and its precursors in cirrhotic patients with and without hepatitis C virus infection. **Patients and methods:** Eighteen patients with cirrhosis Child-Pough A, eight infected with hepatitis C virus, were studied. Urinary excretion of ? aminolevulinic acid, porphobilinogen, coproporphyrins, uroporphyrins and fecal excretion of coproporphyrins and protoporphyrins were measured. Red blood cell protoporphyrin was also measured. **Results:** There were no differences in the measured parameters between patients with or without hepatitis C virus infection. No patient had uroporphyrin excretion values over the normal range. Some patients had slight elevati