

Major histocompatibility system as a risk factor for alcoholic liver disease El sistema mayor de histocompatibilidad como factor de riesgo de la enfermedad hepática alcohólica.

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Several associations between alleles of the major histocompatibility system and alcoholic liver disease have been described. However, these are weak and change from one population to another. The aim of this work was to search for a possible genetic risk factor for alcoholic liver disease among Chilean alcoholics. We studied blood groups, serum proteins and HLA antigens in 39 alcoholic cirrhotics, 104 asymptomatic alcoholics and 44 non alcoholic controls. Asymptomatic alcoholics were also subjected to a percutaneous liver biopsy that showed moderate to severe histological liver damage in 46 subjects (44%). No differences in the studied genetic markers, were found among the four groups. It is concluded that this study does not confirm previously reported associations between genetic markers and alcoholic liver disease.