

## B 型肝炎有機會根治嗎?

Can we cure hepatitis B?

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Chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection is a global public health issue. Although the disease cannot be cured effectively, disease management has been improved over the past decade. The introduction of potent nucleos(t)ide analogues (NAs) to suppress viral replication represented a giant leap in the control of this disease. The next challenge is how to achieve a functional cure for HBV, which is defined as sustained loss of hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg).

Currently, only 2 classes of HBV treatment agents are available. One is interferon, which is an immunomodulatory drug as well as an antiviral agent. The other class of medicine is reverse polymerase inhibitors, often called NAs. However, none of both is effective in achieving HBsAg loss.

New inhibitors of hepatitis B virus entry, replication, assembly, or secretion and immune modulatory therapies are in development. The clinical trial data are either phase 1 or 2 at most, so they are not very mature, but some of them are promising. However, the available data seem to suggest that none of the compounds being tested may be sufficient individually to achieve functional cure. At the present time, It is likely that some type of combination will be needed, one is to work on intracellular targets and another on host immune cells.

In the coming years, we are expecting to see a combination of therapeutic agents with various modes of action to complete the mission of HBV cure effectively and safely.