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Summary

FREE LIGHT CHAINS: NEW POTENTIAL BIOMARKERS FOR DISEASE STRATIFICATION IN NON-ALCOHOLIC FATTY LIVER DISEASE

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Free light chains λ and κ are associated with advanced liver disease and clinically significant portal hypertension in patients with NAFLD, independent of metabolic risk factors.

KEY POINTS

- In 254 patients with metabolic liver disease, total free light chain levels were higher in cirrhosis patients compared with NAFLD/NASH patients ($p<0.01$), but did not differ between NASH and simple steatosis
- Patients with advanced fibrosis (F3-4) had significantly higher free light chains compared with mild-to-moderate fibrosis ($F<3$; $p<0.05$), and levels increased with lobular inflammation severity
- Both κ and λ free light chains were independently associated with compensated advanced chronic liver disease and clinically significant portal hypertension in multivariate analysis adjusting for age, sex, diabetes, dyslipidemia and obesity
- Diagnostic performance was high for both compensated advanced chronic liver disease (AUC 0.79-0.81) and clinically significant portal hypertension (AUC 0.87-0.89)
- The authors conclude that free light chains may be useful biomarkers of advanced liver disease in NAFLD and suggest a role for adaptive immunity in NAFLD pathogenesis

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