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PBC. Primary Biliary Cholangitis

NIHR BioResource – Rare Diseases study project

Lead Investigator: Dr George Mells

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Summary

Primary biliary cholangitis (PBC) is an autoimmune disease of the liver affecting up to 20,000 people in the UK. It results from a slow, progressive destruction of the small bile ducts leading to a build-up of bile and other toxins in the liver. This can lead to scarring, fibrosis and eventually cirrhosis.

Whilst many do well with current therapy, an important group of people have a more aggressive liver disease that can lead to liver failure or other significant long-term complications. Many PBC patients also experience symptoms such as fatigue, itch and concentration problems, which can significantly impair their quality of life. PBC accounts for more than 10% of all liver transplantations performed in the UK.

The goal of this PBC project as part of the NIHR BioResource (in addition to the UK-PBC study), is to understand why some patients with PBC do not respond to current treatments, to help identify better treatments and ultimately to improve clinical care across the UK for people with PBC.

Recruitment Criteria

Inclusion

Adults able to give informed consent and with a diagnosis of PBC based on two of the following three criteria:

- A positive test for anti-mitochondrial antibody (AMA); or PBC specific anti-nuclear antibodies
- Abnormal liver biochemistry (LFT)
- Liver histology consistent with PBC