

Preview of the Medifocus Guidebook on: Liver Cancer

Updated October 16, 2009



This document is only a SHORT PREVIEW of the **Medifocus Guidebook on Liver Cancer**. It is intended primarily to give you a general overview of the **format and structure** of the Guidebook as well as select pages from each major Guidebook section listed in the Table of Contents.

To purchase the COMPLETE Medifocus Guidebook on Liver Cancer (153 pages; Updated October 16, 2009), please:

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Table of Contents

Background Information	8
Introduction	8
About Your Medifocus Guidebook	10
Ordering Full-Text Articles	13
The Intelligent Patient Overview	15
Guide to the Medical Literature	48
Introduction	48
Recent Literature: What Your Doctor Reads	49
Review Articles	49
General Interest Articles	59
Drug Therapy Articles	69
Surgical Therapy Articles	74
Clinical Trials Articles	82
Radiation Therapy Articles	96
Liver Transplantation Articles	98
Radiofrequency Ablation Articles	105
Chemoembolization Articles	110
Centers of Research	112
United States	114
Other Countries	122
Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor	140
Directory of Organizations	146

1 - Background Information

Introduction

Chronic or life-threatening illnesses can have a devastating impact on both the patient and the family. In today's new world of medicine, many consumers have come to realize that they are the ones who are primarily responsible for their own health care as well as for the health care of their loved ones.

When facing a chronic or life-threatening illness, you need to become an educated consumer in order to make an informed health care decision. Essentially that means finding out everything about the illness - the treatment options, the doctors, and the hospitals - so that you can become an educated health care consumer and make the tough decisions. In the past, consumers would go to a library and read everything available about a particular illness or medical condition. In today's world, many turn to the Internet for their medical information needs.

The first sites visited are usually the well known health "portals" or disease organizations and support groups which contain a general overview of the condition for the layperson. That's a good start but soon all of the basic information is exhausted and the need for more advanced information still exists. What are the latest "cutting-edge" treatment options? What are the results of the most up-to-date clinical trials? Who are the most notable experts? Where are the top-ranked medical institutions and hospitals?

The best source for authoritative medical information in the United States is the National Library of Medicine's medical database called PubMed®, that indexes citations and abstracts (brief summaries) of over 7 million articles from more than 3,800 medical journals published worldwide. PubMed® was developed for medical professionals and is the primary source utilized by health care providers for keeping up with the latest advances in clinical medicine.

A typical PubMed® search for a specific disease or condition, however, usually retrieves hundreds or even thousands of "hits" of journal article citations. That's an avalanche of information that needs to be evaluated and transformed into truly useful knowledge. What are the most relevant journal articles? Which ones apply to your specific situation? Which articles are considered to be the most authoritative - the ones your physician would rely on in making clinical decisions? This is where *Medifocus.com* provides an effective solution.

Medifocus.com has developed an extensive library of *MediFocus Guidebooks* covering a wide spectrum of chronic and life threatening diseases. Each *MediFocus Guidebook* is a

high quality, up- to-date digest of "professional-level" medical information consisting of the most relevant citations and abstracts of journal articles published in authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This information represents the latest advances known to modern medicine for the treatment and management of the condition, including published results from clinical trials. Each *Guidebook* also includes a valuable index of leading authors and medical institutions as well as a directory of disease organizations and support groups. *MediFocus Guidebooks* are reviewed, revised and updated every 4-months to ensure that you receive the latest and most up-to-date information about the specific condition.

About Your MediFocus Guidebook

Introduction

Your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a valuable resource that represents a comprehensive synthesis of the most up-to-date, advanced medical information published about the condition in well-respected, trustworthy medical journals. It is the same type of professional-level information used by physicians and other health-care professionals to keep abreast of the latest developments in biomedical research and clinical medicine. The *Guidebook* is intended for patients who have a need for more advanced, in-depth medical information than is generally available to consumers from a variety of other resources. The primary goal of a *MediFocus Guidebook* is to educate patients and their families about their treatment options so that they can make informed health-care decisions and become active participants in the medical decision making process.

The *Guidebook* production process involves a team of professionals with expertise in diverse areas including experienced medical database researchers and practicing physicians who serve as members of the *Medifocus.com* Medical Advisory Board (MAB). This team approach to the development and production of the *MediFocus Guidebooks* is designed to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and clinical relevance of the information. The *Guidebook* is intended to serve as a basis for more meaningful discussions between patients and their health-care providers in a joint effort to seek the most appropriate course of treatment for the disease.

Guidebook Organization and Content

Section 1 - Background Information

This section provides detailed information about the organization and content of the *Guidebook* including tips and suggestions for conducting additional research about the condition.

Section 2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* represents a detailed overview of the disease or condition specifically written from the patient's perspective. It is designed to satisfy the basic informational needs of consumers and their families who are confronted with the illness and are facing difficult choices. Important aspects which are addressed in "The Intelligent Patient" section include:

- The etiology or cause of the disease
- Signs and symptoms
- How the condition is diagnosed
- The current standard of care for the disease

- Treatment options
- New developments
- Important questions to ask your health care provider

Section 3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

This is a roadmap to important and up-to-date medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest developments and breakthroughs in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new clinical developments, and advances in research. To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles are grouped by specific categories. A typical *MediFocus Guidebook* usually contains one or more of the following article groupings:

- *Review Articles*: Articles included in this category are broad in scope and are intended to provide the reader with a detailed overview of the condition including such important aspects as its cause, diagnosis, treatment, and new advances.
- *General Interest Articles*: These articles are broad in scope and contain supplementary information about the condition that may be of interest to select groups of patients.
- *Drug Therapy*: Articles that provide information about the effectiveness of specific drugs or other biological agents for the treatment of the condition.
- *Surgical Therapy*: Articles that provide information about specific surgical treatments for the condition.
- *Clinical Trials*: Articles in this category summarize studies which compare the safety and efficacy of a new, experimental treatment modality to currently available standard treatments for the condition. In many cases, clinical trials represent the latest advances in the field and may be considered as being on the "cutting edge" of medicine. Some of these experimental treatments may have already been incorporated into clinical practice.

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Article title
- Author Name(s)
- Institution where the study was done

- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the corresponding URL address that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of a *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the article abstracts online by entering the individual URL address for a particular article into your web browser.

Section 4 - Centers of Research

We've compiled a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of the specific medical condition. The "Centers of Research" directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of the condition.

Inclusion of the names of specific doctors, researchers, hospitals, medical centers, or research institutions in this *Guidebook* does not imply endorsement by Medifocus.com, Inc. or any of its affiliates. Consumers are encouraged to conduct additional research to identify health-care professionals, hospitals, and medical institutions with expertise in providing specific medical advice, guidance, and treatment for this condition.

Section 5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver high-level, quality medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it. This section of your *Guidebook* offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Section 6 - Directory of Organizations

This section of your *Guidebook* is a directory of select disease organizations and support groups that are in the business of helping patients and their families by providing access to information, resources, and services. Many of these organizations can answer your questions, enable you to network with other patients, and help you find a doctor in your geographical area who specializes in managing your condition.

2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

LIVER CANCER

Introduction to Liver Cancer

The *liver*, which is located in the upper right corner of the abdomen, is one of the body's most vital organs and performs many important metabolic functions that are critical for maintaining a person's health and well-being. The liver is the largest single organ in the human body and, in an average adult, weighs about 3 pounds. The liver is divided into two major lobes (right and left lobes) which can be further subdivided microscopically into about a million smaller functional units called *lobules*. The lobules, in turn, consist of individual liver cells called *hepatocytes*.

It has been estimated that the liver performs about 500 different functions in the human body. Some of these major functions include:

- *Converting food into energy* - The liver stores carbohydrates in abundant amounts of glycogen (a form of glucose). When the body requires an energy "boost", the liver breaks down the stored glycogen into glucose that is then released into the bloodstream and transported to the tissues and organs where it is converted by the cells into energy.
- *Production of bile* - The liver produces a substance called bile which helps the body in the process of digestion of fats.
- *Detoxification (purification) of blood* - The liver filters blood and helps to eliminate waste products and toxins from the bloodstream.
- *Production of cholesterol* - The liver helps regulate the levels of cholesterol in the bloodstream. Cholesterol is used by cells to form the outer membrane of cells and is needed by cells to carry out other important functions.
- *Resistance to infection* The liver produces specialized immune cells called *macrophages* which are critical in helping the body destroy and eliminate foreign microorganisms (e.g., bacteria) that can cause serious, life-threatening infections.
- The liver also plays an important role in *metabolism of fats and proteins* which are vital for optimal function of cells.

Diseases of the Liver

Although there are over 100 different diseases that can affect the liver, a few of these deserve

special mention because they have been identified as risk factors for the development of *hepatocellular carcinoma* - the most common type of primary liver cancer. These liver diseases include:

- *Chronic hepatitis infection* - Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver that is usually caused by a virus. The most common types of viral hepatitis in the United States include:
 - *Hepatitis A* - usually contracted by eating foods or drinking water that has been contaminated with the hepatitis A virus. Approximately 150,000 people in the United States are infected with Hepatitis A virus each year.
 - *Hepatitis B* - usually contracted through contaminated blood, blood products, or sexual contact. About 1 million people in the United States are infected with Hepatitis B virus.
 - *Hepatitis C* - this virus is also usually contracted by coming into contact with contaminated blood (such as sharing needles) or by sexual contact. Approximately 4 million people in the United States are infected with Hepatitis C virus.
- *Cirrhosis of the liver* - This condition occurs as a result of chronic liver inflammation which causes the accumulation of fibrous scar tissue in the liver. As a consequence of the build-up of scar tissue, the liver loses its ability to perform its vital functions that are necessary for maintaining good overall health. Liver cirrhosis can be caused by chronic infection with the hepatitis B or hepatitis C virus, chronic alcohol abuse, and *hemochromatosis* (a genetic disorder that results in the accumulation of excess levels of iron in the liver as well as other organs in the body)
- *Alcoholic liver disease* - Chronic (long-term) abuse of alcohol can lead to inflammation of the liver that, in turn, causes liver cirrhosis and permanent liver damage.
- *Liver tumors* - Tumors of the liver may be grouped into those that are *benign* (non-cancerous) and those that are *malignant* (cancerous). The most common type of benign liver tumors are *hemangiomas* - tumors that originate in the blood vessels. The most common type of *primary* malignant liver cancer is known as *hepatocellular carcinoma*. This is a primary form of liver cancer because the cancer originates in the liver cells (hepatocytes). Cancer that metastasizes (spreads) to the liver from another organ in the body where it originally started is referred to as *secondary* liver cancer.

What is Hepatocellular Carcinoma?

Hepatocellular carcinoma, also called *malignant hepatoma*, is the most common form of primary malignant liver cancer and originates in the hepatocyte cells of the liver. Unless otherwise specified, the term "liver cancer" is used throughout this Guidebook to refer specifically to *hepatocellular carcinoma* which represents the most common type of primary liver cancer.

Hepatocellular carcinoma (liver cancer) is the fifth most common type of cancer worldwide with nearly 500,000 new cases diagnosed each year. Although the incidence of liver cancer is highest in parts of Africa and Asia, increasing numbers of cases are being diagnosed in the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. Approximately 19,000 cases of primary liver cancer are diagnosed each year in the United States with an overall incidence of 2.4 to 3.2 cases per 100,000 people. Hepatocellular carcinoma is the most common type of primary liver cancer in adults and represents about 75% of all primary liver tumors. This type of liver cancer occurs much more frequently in men than in women.

Although the exact cause of hepatocellular carcinoma is not currently known, this is one of the few types of cancers with well-defined risk factors. A *risk factor* is any characteristic or activity that increases a person's chances of developing a particular disease or disorder. The major risk factors for hepatocellular carcinoma include:

- *Cirrhosis of the liver* - Approximately 80% of cases of liver cancer are diagnosed in patients with liver cirrhosis. Since chronic alcohol abuse is a major cause of liver cirrhosis, it is also recognized as a major risk factor for liver cancer.
- *Hepatitis* - Chronic infection with the Hepatitis B virus or the Hepatitis C virus increases a person's risk for developing cirrhosis of the liver and, therefore, also increases the risk for developing liver cancer. In the United States, infection with the Hepatitis C virus is about 3 times more common than infection with the Hepatitis B virus and, consequently, about 50% of cases of liver cancer in the U.S. occur in patients infected with Hepatitis C.
- *Exposure to aflatoxins* - Aflatoxins are toxic substances produced by certain fungi (molds) under warm humid, conditions that can contaminate crops. In some parts of the world, but not the United States, aflatoxin crop contamination is a major problem and has been linked to the development of liver cancer.
- *Hemochromatosis* - Hereditary hemochromatosis is a genetic disorder that results in the excessive accumulation of iron in various organs of the body, including the liver, that can result in liver cirrhosis. It has been estimated that liver cancer occurs in about 7% to 22% of patients with hereditary hemochromatosis who also have liver cirrhosis.
- *Primary biliary cirrhosis* - Primary biliary cirrhosis is a disease characterized by inflammatory destruction of the *small bile ducts* within the liver. Primary biliary cirrhosis eventually leads to cirrhosis of the liver and is, therefore, a risk factor for developing liver cancer.
- *Anabolic steroids* - Athletes who use anabolic steroids (e.g., testosterone) for a long period of time to increase muscle mass are at increased risk for developing primary liver cancer.
- *Gender* - In the United States, liver cancer occurs much more frequently in males than females by a ratio of about 3 to 1.
- *Age* - In the United States, liver cancer occurs much more frequently in people over the age

of 60 than in younger people.

- *Race* - The incidence of liver cancer is about twice as high in African-Americans that in Caucasians.
- *Family history* - A family history of liver cancer may be an additional risk factor for developing this condition.

The **Intelligent Patient Overview** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Liver Cancer** also includes the following additional sections:

- **Diagnosis of Liver Cancer**
- **Treatment Options for Liver Cancer**
- **The Role of Complementary and Alternative Therapies in Cancer**
- **Quality of Life Issues in Cancer**
- **Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Liver Cancer**

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3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

Introduction

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a comprehensive bibliography of important recent medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest advances in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new developments, and advances in research.

To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles in this *MediFocus Guidebook* are grouped in the following categories:

- Review Articles - 37 Articles
- General Interest Articles - 30 Articles
- Drug Therapy Articles - 14 Articles
- Surgical Therapy Articles - 24 Articles
- Clinical Trials Articles - 41 Articles
- Radiation Therapy Articles - 6 Articles
- Liver Transplantation Articles - 20 Articles
- Radiofrequency Ablation Articles - 13 Articles
- Chemoembolization Articles - 6 Articles

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Title of the article
- Name of the authors
- Institution where the study was done
- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the URI that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of the *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the abstracts online by entering the individual URI for a particular abstract into your computer's web browser.

Recent Literature: What Your Doctor Reads

Database: PubMed <January 2007 to October 2009>

Review Articles

1.

Systematic review of randomized trials for hepatocellular carcinoma treated with percutaneous ablation therapies.

Authors: Cho YK; Kim JK; Kim MY; Rhim H; Han JK
Institution: Department of Radiology, Seoul Veterans Hospital, Seoul, Korea.
yunkucho2004@yahoo.co.kr
Journal: Hepatology. 2009 Feb;49(2):453-9.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=OC031&ID=19065676>

2.

Molecular therapy for the treatment of hepatocellular carcinoma.

Authors: Greten TF; Korangy F; Manns MP; Malek NP
Institution: Department of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Endocrinology, Center for Internal Medicine, Medical School of Hannover, Hannover, Germany.
greten.tim@mh-hannover.de
Journal: Br J Cancer. 2009 Jan 13;100(1):19-23. Epub 2008 Nov 18.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=OC031&ID=19018262>

3.

The current role of radiofrequency ablation in the management of hepatocellular carcinoma: a systematic review.

Authors: Lau WY; Lai EC
Institution: Faculty of Medicine, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Prince of Wales Hospital, Shatin, New Territories, Hong Kong SAR, China.
josephlau@cuhk.edu.hk
Journal: Ann Surg. 2009 Jan;249(1):20-5.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=OC031&ID=19106671>

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- Chemoembolization Articles - 6 Articles

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4 - Centers of Research

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition. The *Centers of Research* directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of this disorder.

Use the *Centers of Research* directory to contact, consult, or network with leading experts in the field and to locate a hospital or medical center that can help you.

The following information is provided in the *Centers of Research* directory:

- **Geographic Location**

- United States: the information is divided by individual states listed in alphabetical order. Not all states may be included.
- Other Countries: information is presented for select countries worldwide listed in alphabetical order. Not all countries may be included.

- **Names of Authors**

- Select names of individual authors (doctors, researchers, or other health-care professionals) with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition, who have recently published articles in leading medical journals about the condition.
- E-mail addresses for individual authors, if listed on their specific publications, is also provided.

- **Institutional Affiliations**

- Next to each individual author's name is their **institutional affiliation** (hospital, medical center, or research institution) where the study was conducted as listed in their publication(s).
- In many cases, information about the specific **department** within the medical institution where the individual author was located at the time the study was conducted is also provided.

Centers of Research

United States

AZ - Arizona

Name of Author

Gilani N

Institutional Affiliation

Department of Medicine and Research, Section of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Carl T Hayden VA Medical Center, Phoenix, AZ 85012, USA.

Randolph AC

Department of Medicine and Research, Section of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Carl T Hayden VA Medical Center, Phoenix, AZ 85012, USA.

CA - California

Name of Author

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Institutional Affiliation

Divisions of Transplantation, Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital and Stanford University School of Medicine, Stanford, CA 94304, USA.

Blatt LM

The Pflieger Liver Institute, Division of Digestive Diseases, David Geffen School of Medicine, University of California in Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA, USA. myrontong@hmri.org

Busuttil RW

Dumont-University of California, Los Angeles, Transplant Center, 77-120 CHS, Box 957054, 10833 Le Conte Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90095-7054, USA.

Corley DA

School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco, Oakland, CA 94605, USA. RobertWong123@gmail.com

Duffy JP

Dumont-UCLA Transplant Center, Department of Surgery, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Esquivel CO

Divisions of Transplantation, Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital and Stanford University School of Medicine, Stanford, CA 94304, USA.

Gandara DR

Department of Medical Oncology and Therapeutic Research, City of Hope National Medical Center, Duarte, CA 91010-3000, USA. yyen@coh.org

The **Centers of Research** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Liver Cancer** includes the following sections:

- Centers of Research for relevant states in the United States
- Centers of Research listed for relevant countries outside the United States

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5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

Introduction

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver a high level and quality of medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it.

The process of finding and choosing a physician to manage your specific illness or condition is, in some respects, analogous to the process of making a decision about whether or not to invest in a particular stock or mutual fund. After all, you wouldn't invest your hard earned money in a stock or mutual fund without first doing exhaustive research about the stock or fund's past performance, current financial status, and projected future earnings. More than likely you would spend a considerable amount of time and energy doing your own research and consulting with your stock broker before making an informed decision about investing. The same general principle applies to the process of finding and choosing a physician. Although the process requires a considerable investment in terms of both time and energy, the potential payoff can be well worth it--after all, what can be more important than your health and well-being?

This section of your Guidebook offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Tips for Finding Physicians

Finding a highly qualified, competent, and compassionate physician to manage your specific illness or condition takes a lot of hard work and energy but is an investment that is well-worth the effort. It is important to keep in mind that you are not looking for just any general physician but rather for a physician who has expertise in the treatment and management of your specific illness or condition. Here are some suggestions for where you can turn to identify and locate physicians who specialize in managing your disorder:

- **Your Doctor** - Your family physician (family medicine or internal medicine specialist) is a good starting point for finding a physician who specializes in your illness. Chances are that your doctor already knows several specialists in your geographic area who specialize in your illness and can recommend several names to you. Your doctor can also provide you with information about their qualifications, training, and hospital affiliations.

The **Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Liver Cancer** includes additional information that will assist you in locating a highly qualified and competent physician to manage your specific illness.

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6 - Directory of Organizations

Adrienne Wilson Liver Cancer Association

1135 N. Valley Street; Burbank, CA 91505

818.636.5624

www.bluefaery.org

American Cancer Society

1599 Clifton Road NE; Atlanta, GA 30329-4251

404.486.0100; 800.227.2345

www.cancer.org

American College of Gastroenterology

POB 342260; Bethesda, MD 20827

301.263.9000

www.acg.gi.org

American Institute for Cancer Research; Nutrition Hotline

1759 R St., NW.; Washington, DC 20009

202.328.7744; 800.843.8114

-
www.aicr.org

Association of Cancer Online Resources

www.acor.org

Cancer Care

275 7th Avenue; New York, NY 10001

800.813.4673

www.cancercare.org

Cancer Caring Center

4117 Liberty Avenue; Pittsburgh, PA 15224

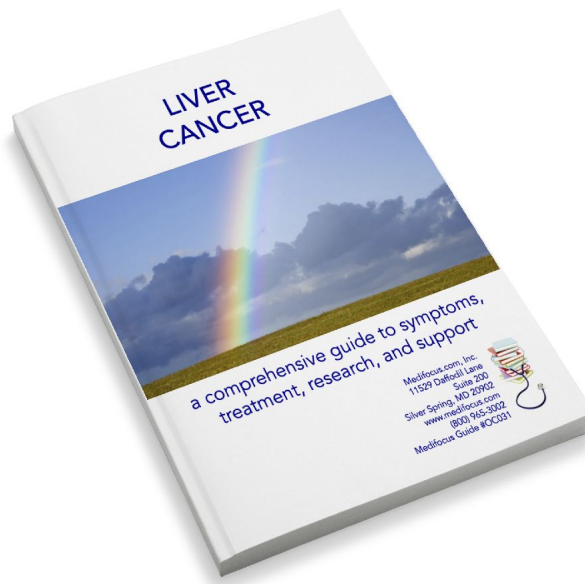
412.622.1212

info@cancercaring.org

www.cancercaring.org

The **Directory of Organizations** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Liver Cancer** includes a list of selected disease organizations and support groups that are helping people diagnosed with Liver Cancer.

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