IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans. Volume 59. Hepatitis Viruses. - International Agency for Research on Cancer, Lyon 1994. 286 pp. Sw. Fr. 65.00, in developing countries 45.50. ISBN 92 832 1259 2, Order No. 1720059.

This IARC Monograph for the first time evaluates the carcinogenicity of a class of biological agents - the three hepatotropic viruses: hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C viruses, and hepatitis D virus, which exists as a satellite agent of hepatitis B virus. The evaluation takes on particular importance in view of the high prevalence of chronic infection with this virus, particularly in developing countries. The introductory parts of the Monograph covers the primary structure of the viruses and methods for the detection. Investigations in humans have been facilitated by sensitive serological methods for the detection of exposure at different stages of infection. Some 1000 studies on the possible link between infection with hepatitis viruses and hepatocellular carcinoma are reviewed. The Monograph concludes that chronic infection with hepatitis virus B and C is carcinogenic to humans.

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