

## An annual topic highlight: Alcohol and liver, 2011

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### Abstract

An annual topic highlight: Alcohol and Liver, 2011, covers the important and new aspects of pathogenesis of alcoholic liver diseases (ALD). It includes broad topics ranging from the exacerbation of ALD by infectious (viral) agents (hepatitis C virus and human immunodeficiency virus) to the influence of alcohol on liver fibrogenesis, lipid rafts, autophagy and other aspects. This issue is recommended for both basic scientists and clinicians who are involved in alcoholic liver research.

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**Key words:** Liver; Alcohol; Autophagy; Fibrogenesis; Immune cells; Lipid rafts; Mouse models; Hepatitis C; Human immunodeficiency virus

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This annual topic highlight is the fourth issue of reviews devoted to alcoholic liver diseases (ALD) pathogenesis and treatment. It is one of the most respectful annual series of reviews in alcohol research, and now it has an established audience as well as the contributing authors, who are the leading specialists in alcohol studies, including experts from National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Here, we cover new aspects of alcohol research that were not addressed in our previous issues. Because alcohol exposure

induces epigenetic changes in liver cells, two articles of this Topic Highlight<sup>[1,2]</sup> focused on the epigenetic regulation in ALD. Another two articles<sup>[3,4]</sup> addressed the mechanisms of pro-fibrotic changes in ALD. Several articles<sup>[5-7]</sup> summarized the available animal models for studying HCV infection based on “second-hit” effects of infections in ALD progression. In addition, other important aspects of ALD pathobiology, such as the role of lipid rafts, microRNAs, MSGT1, hepatic stellate cells and innate immunity and the proteasome inhibitor for ALD treatment are included in this issue<sup>[8-12]</sup>.

This Topic Highlight provides an overview of the most modern literature/approaches in the alcohol research and is strongly recommended for gastroenterologists, hepatologists and scientists who work in this field.

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