



## Emerging role of hepatoprotective treatment options for NAFLD



### **Prof Jian-Gao Fan**

Professor and Director of the Center for Fatty Liver and the Department of Gastroenterology at Xinhua Hospital, Shanghai Jiao Tong University School of Medicine, China.



Flash for webinar (~20 mins)

SANOFI 

# Emerging role of hepatoprotective treatment options for NAFLD

## NAFLD: Prevalence, incidence and trends in China

The incidence of NAFLD is increasing in China as obesity becomes a widespread problem. Nearly, half of all liver disease in China is due to NAFLD.<sup>1</sup> In Asia, 60% of NAFLD cases can be reversed by lifestyle interventions, however, 25% progress to NASH with eventual progression to fibrosis. There is no cirrhosis reported in 30-50% of NAFLD-related cases of HCC, however, the absolute risk of HCC in non-cirrhotic patients is <0.1%.<sup>2</sup>

There is a consensus-driven proposed nomenclature change of the disease from NAFLD to MAFLD.<sup>3</sup>

Diagnosis of MAFLD is based on the existence of hepatic steatosis, in addition to one of the following three criteria: overweight/obesity, presence of T2DM, or evidence of metabolic dysregulation.<sup>3</sup>

## NAFLD treatment goals and strategies

The aim is to achieve weight loss, build muscle mass and reduce comorbidities, in order to prevent disease progression.<sup>4</sup> Chinese guidelines promote lifestyle interventions as first-line: diet, weight loss and exercise.<sup>5</sup>

Pharmacological treatment is recommended for NASH and several promising treatments are under Phase III trials.<sup>6</sup> Hepatoprotectants may be used in NAFLD when lifestyle modification brings no improvement after 3-6 months as adjunctive therapy. Approved molecules include: EPL, vitamin E, silymarin, adenosylmethionine and reduced glutathione.<sup>5,7</sup>

## Clinical evidence for hepatoprotectants

An RCT compared silymarin with placebo in patients with NASH and NAFLD, no significant difference was seen except in mean change in triglyceride levels.<sup>8</sup> The efficacy of adjuvant EPL therapy has been evaluated in several RCTs with significantly higher response rates obtained with EPL and ultrasound-ascertained steatosis becoming significantly less severe with Essentiale®.<sup>9</sup> Higher reductions in serum triglycerides and TC with Essentiale® have also been reported.<sup>9</sup> These results have recently been confirmed in a large real-world evidence study, MANPOWER.<sup>10</sup>

### References

1. AWang FS, *et al.* The global burden of liver disease: the major impact of China. *Hepatology*. 2014;60:2099–2108.
2. Fan JG, *et al.* New trends on obesity and NAFLD in Asia. *J Hepatol*. 2017;67:862–873.
3. Fouad Y, *et al.* What's in a name? Renaming 'NAFLD' to 'MAFLD'. *Liver Int*. 2020;40:1254–1261.
4. Fan JG, *et al.* Guidelines of prevention and treatment of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (2018, China). *J Dig Dis*. 2019;20:163–173.
5. Gao X & Fan GJ. Diagnosis and management of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and related metabolic disorders: consensus statement from the Study Group of Liver and Metabolism, Chinese Society of Endocrinology. *J Diabetes*. 2013;406–15.
6. Eshraghian A. Current and emerging pharmacological therapy for non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. *World J Gastroenterol*. 2017;23:7495–504.
7. Fan JG, *et al.* *J Dig Dis*. 2018;1–11.
8. Kheong C *et al.* A Randomized Trial of Silymarin for the Treatment of Nonalcoholic Steatohepatitis. *Clin Gastroenterol Hepatol*. 2017;15:1940–9.e8.
9. Gundermann KJ, *et al.* Essential phospholipids in fatty liver: a scientific update. *Clin Exp Gastroenterol*. 2016;9:105–17.
10. Maev IV, *et al.* Effectiveness of phosphatidylcholine as adjunctive therapy in improving liver function tests in patients with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and metabolic comorbidities: real-life observational study from Russia. *BMJ Open Gastroenterol*. 2020;7:e000368.

**EPL:** essential phospholipids; **NAFLD:** non-alcoholic fatty liver disease; **NASH:** non-alcoholic steatohepatitis; **HCC:** hepatocellular carcinoma; **T2DM:** type 2 diabetes; **RCT:** randomized controlled trial; **TC:** total cholesterol.

# Emerging role of hepatoprotective treatment options for NAFLD

## Key learnings:

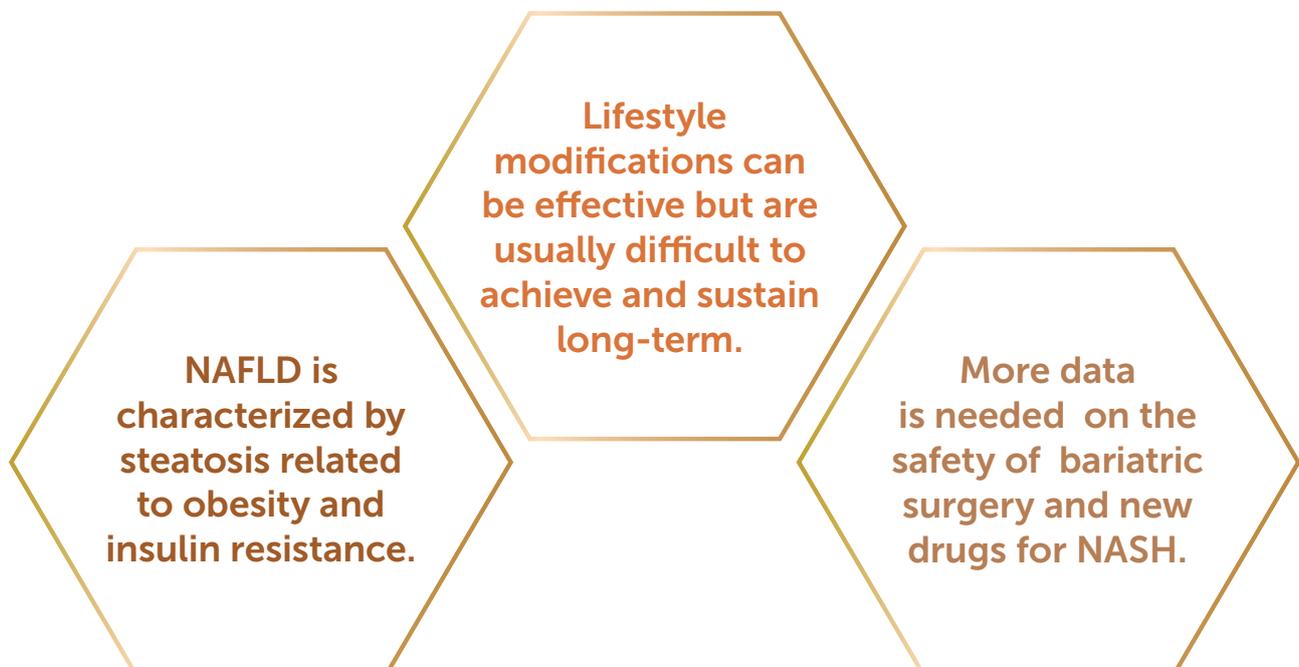


Clinical experience from China with exploration of Chinese guidelines for NAFLD diagnoses and treatment.



The importance of hepatoprotective treatment options in the overall treatment strategy of NAFLD.

## Main take aways:



The logo features a stylized liver shape with a hexagonal pattern, transitioning from orange to red. The text "1st GLOBAL LIVER HEALTH FORUM" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font over the liver shape.

**1<sup>st</sup> GLOBAL  
LIVER  
HEALTH  
FORUM**

**SANOFI** 

**MAT-GLB-2003464**