

Merck publishes its Hepatitis C drug trial data

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Grazoprevir/elbasvir is the company's investigational NS3/4A protease inhibitor and NS5A inhibitor, in combination with sofosbuvir, a nucleotide (NS5B) inhibitor for the treatment of chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection.

Preliminary findings will be presented by Dr Eric Lawitz, vice president, scientific and research development, The Texas Liver Institute, Texas, USA, and C-SWIFT's lead investigator.

"Our goal is to establish a simple, effective, well-tolerated regimen that is applicable across the diverse population of patients with HCV," said Dr. Eliav Barr, vice president, infectious diseases, Merck Research Laboratories. "The preliminary data provide us with the confidence to initiate our C-CREST study to evaluate a triple combination comprising Merck's investigational candidates from three major therapeutic classes of HCV medicines."

"These interim data provide a compelling proof-of-concept for the potential of an eight- or six-week triple therapy course in treatment-naive patients with genotype 1 disease, including cirrhotic patients," said Dr Eric Lawitz. "These findings will inform the design of larger studies aimed at understanding the potential of short-duration triple therapy across multiple patient types."