

# **A retrospective autopsy study of histopathologic spectrum and etiologic trend of fulminant hepatic failure from north India**

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## **A retrospective autopsy study of histopathologic spectrum and etiologic trend of fulminant hepatic failure from north India**

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## **Abstract**

**Background:** Fulminant hepatic failure (FHF) is rapidly fatal and liver transplant is the treatment of choice. The condition is known for its heterogeneity of defining criteria, clinical presentation, histologic spectrum and etiologic factors. The etiology of FHF varies widely, some of which includes viral hepatitis, drug overdose and idiosyncratic drug reactions. The identification of the etiology of FHF is critically important, because it influences the management. A histopathological classification of FHF has not been reported earlier in the literature.

**Methods:** The current study was conducted retrospectively on 224 autopsies at a tertiary care hospital in India. In all of these cases the liver was examined grossly and microscopically. Clinical findings, serological data and immunohistochemical findings were correlated with the morphological subtypes and a consensus morphological classification was formulated.

**Results:** Young females, especially those in the reproductive age group were most susceptible to the disease. Hepatotropic viruses and drugs were the likely causes in most of the patients. Clinical presentation is important, as delayed onset of encephalopathy or the subacute FHF's lead to maximum mortality. After careful gross and microscopic examination the morphological findings of FHF were divided into four distinct categories. Histologic typing can sometimes be misleading if solely made on H & E slides without application of special stains.

**Conclusion:** Fulminant hepatic failure is a medical emergency, proper histological categorization can help in deciding the treatment modalities.

## **References**

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