

## **Amebic liver abscess-Infectious Disease Clinics**

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Hughes MA<sup>1</sup>, Petri WA Jr.

<sup>1</sup>Department of Medicine, University of Virginia Health Sciences Center, Charlottesville, USA.  
mah3x@virginia.edu

### **Abstract**

Amebiasis is a widespread parasitic disease caused by the protozoan *Entamoeba histolytica*. Amebiasis most commonly results in asymptomatic colonization of the gastrointestinal tract, but some patients may develop intestinal invasive disease with ulcerative and inflammatory lesions of the colon.<sup>4,42</sup> Amebic liver abscess (ALA) is the most common extraintestinal manifestation of *E. histolytica* infection. Amebic liver abscess is marked by a significant male preponderance and is a disease seen most commonly in patients who reside in or have emigrated from an endemic area or have a recent travel history to an endemic area. Patients typically present with acute or chronic abdominal pain and associated constitutional symptoms, but rarely have concurrent dysentery or bloody stools.<sup>29,41,58</sup> Stool examination and stool antigen detection tests are usually unhelpful because most patients with ALA do not have detectable parasites in their stool.<sup>58</sup> Serologic testing with enzyme immunoassays (EIA) specific for *E. histolytica* circulating antibodies may aid in the diagnosis of ALA.<sup>32</sup> In most cases, medical management alone is sufficient to treat uncomplicated cases. Metronidazole remains the drug of choice for treatment of ALA followed by a luminal agent to eradicate the asymptomatic carrier state.<sup>24,36</sup>

### **References**

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