

Hepatic cirrhosis

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Medical language seeks clarity and precision in its terms to avoid confusion and ambiguity. However, sometimes tradition perpetuates some expressions which could currently be considered inappropriate. This is the case of the syntagm hepatic cirrhosis.

Cirrhosis: (From the scientific Latin *cirrhosis*, and this from the Greek κιρρός kirrós ‘dark orange’ + -σις -osis ‘pathologic process’; coined by Laënnec in 1805):

- 1) Med. A disease characterized by a lesion which develops in the viscera, especially the liver, and consists of induration of the conjunctive elements and atrophy of the rest.
- 2) Induration of an organ due to fibrous tissue proliferation and atrophy of the parenchymal cells.

Hepatic, ca: (From the Latin *hepaticus*, and this from the Greek ήπατικός hēpatikós ‘related to the liver’, derived from ήπατος hēpatos ‘liver’):

- 1) adj. From or related to the liver.
- 2) adj. Having liver problems

Consequently, the word cirrhosis applies to any affectation or scarring of parenchymal organs such as the liver, kidney and lung. However, tacitly, medical terminology has reserved this term exclusively for disease of the first organ, which is why most people consider hepatic cirrhosis to be a redundancy, and prefer instead to clarify its possible type or etiology through expressions such as alcoholic cirrhosis, autoimmune cirrhosis, biliary cirrhosis, postviral cirrhosis, etc.

Sources:

- *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española de la Lengua*, disponible en: www.rae.es
- *Real Academia Nacional de Medicina. Diccionario de Términos Médicos. Editorial Médica Panamericana. 2012*



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