

JUSTIFICATION

Chronic hepatitis C is a major cause of liver disease, cirrhosis, and liver cancer. It affects around 3.2 million American and ~170 million persons world-wide. The currently recommended therapy for chronic hepatitis C is a combination of interferon alpha and ribavirin, but this treatment is very costly, has significant side effects and is only 50% effective. Complementary and alternative medications, such as silymarin for liver disease have been widely used around the world for a long time with significant reported benefits and with few reported side effects. Due to this, we have chosen to investigate the role of this natural compound in this important human disease.