

Transplant Pathology

Acute hepatitis and acute liver failure: Pathologic diagnosis and differential diagnosis

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Acute hepatitis and acute liver failure are severe medical conditions that require early clinical intervention. Histopathologic findings on a liver biopsy or a liver explant may help identify the underlying etiology or provide an important direction for further clinical, laboratory and radiographical investigation. This presentation will focus on general morphologic features based on which the diagnosis of acute hepatitis and acute liver failure are made, unique histologic features that can be associated with specific etiologies, and non-necrotic acute liver failure that typically features diffuse microvesicular steatosis secondary to various etiologies causing mitochondrial dysfunction. Histopathologic distinction between collapse (due to acute hepatitis) and cirrhosis and limitations of histopathologic assessment for underlying etiologies will be discussed.