

Oncology Clinical Pathways

Hepatocellular Carcinoma

June 2025 – V1.2025



Choose **VA**



SHOULDER to SHOULDER
Every Step of the Way

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Table of Contents

[Presumptive Conditions](#).....3

[Initial Evaluation](#).....4

[Advanced Child A First Line](#).....5

[Advanced Child A Second Line](#).....6

[Molecular Testing Table](#).....7

Hepatocellular Carcinoma – Presumptive Conditions

VA automatically presumes that certain disabilities were caused by military service. This is because of the unique circumstances of a specific Veteran's military service. If a presumed condition is diagnosed in a Veteran within a certain group, they can be awarded disability compensation.

Vietnam Veterans – Agent Orange Exposure or Specified Locations

- Primary liver cancer

Gulf War and Post 9/11 Veterans

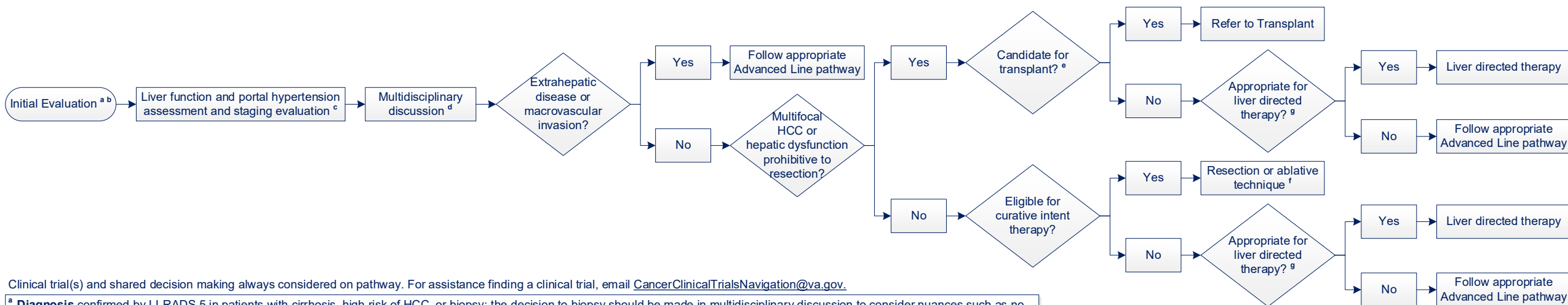
If the patient served on or after Sept. 11, 2001, in Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Uzbekistan, or Yemen or if you served in the *Southwest Asia theater of operations, or Somalia, on or after Aug. 2, 1990, specific conditions include:

- Gastrointestinal cancer of any type

* The Southwest Asia theater of operations refers to Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and the airspace above these locations.

For more information, please visit [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - Presumptive Disability Benefits \(va.gov\)](https://www.va.gov/presumptive-disability-benefits/)

Hepatocellular Carcinoma – Initial Evaluation



Clinical trial(s) and shared decision making always considered on pathway. For assistance finding a clinical trial, email CancerClinicalTrialsNavigation@va.gov.

^a **Diagnosis** confirmed by LI-RADS 5 in patients with cirrhosis, high risk of HCC, or biopsy; the decision to biopsy should be made in multidisciplinary discussion to consider nuances such as no AFP elevation, no underlying cirrhosis, infiltrative disease, aggressive phenotype, concern for mixed cholangiocarcinoma, or history of prior malignancy

^b **All Patients Diagnosed with HCC** should undergo testing for viral hepatitis (HCV Ab, HBV sAg, cAb, sAb, HAV Ab); if HAV or HBV serologies are negative, vaccination is recommended; for any active disease, refer to hepatology; if HCV Ab positive, confirm active disease with HCV RNA, then if positive, seek hepatology evaluation for antiviral treatment

^c **Staging Evaluation** determined by chest CT and multiphase abdominal imaging if not already performed and AFP test

^d **Multidisciplinary Discussion** minimum expertise required includes medical and surgical oncology, hepatology, radiation oncology, diagnostic radiology, and interventional radiology; recommend discussing cases in local, regional, or VISN liver tumor boards where extensive expertise in all necessary disciplines are available; in the setting of an underlying etiology for hepatitis (i.e., viral hepatitis), patient should be evaluated with appropriate local expertise in guiding treatment

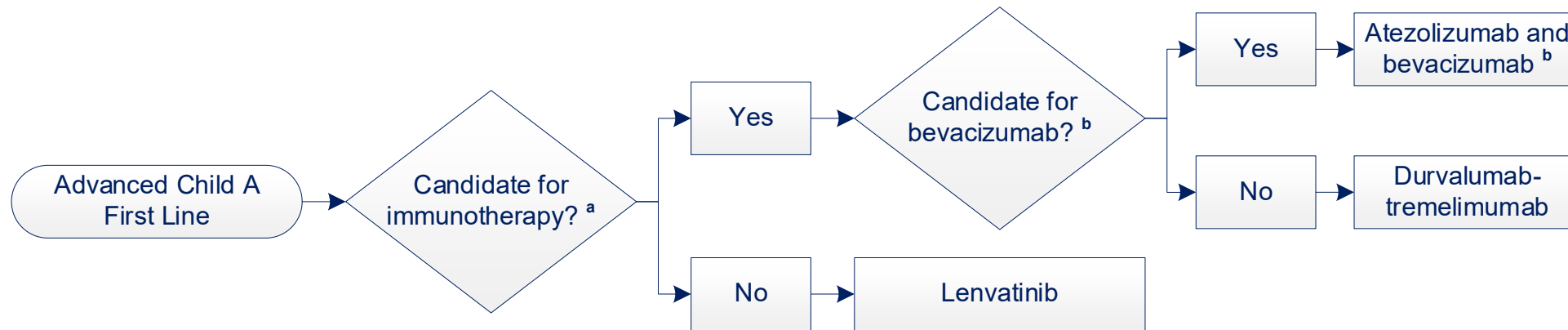
^e **Candidate for Transplant** patient must not be eligible for surgical resection

^f **Resection or Ablative Technique** emerging data states SBRT and radiation segmentectomy may have curative intent; consider based on tumor location, patient comorbidities, and local access and expertise

^g **Appropriate for Liver Directed Therapy** appropriateness is determined by multidisciplinary discussion based on tumor biology as well as technical feasibility

AFP Alpha Fetoprotein
HCC Hepatocellular Carcinoma
LI-RADS Liver Reporting and Data System

Hepatocellular Carcinoma – Advanced Child A First Line



Clinical trial(s) and shared decision making always considered on pathway. For assistance finding a clinical trial, email CancerClinicalTrialsNavigation@va.gov.

^a **Candidate for Immunotherapy** prior recipients of solid organ transplant or those with uncontrolled autoimmune/inflammatory condition should not be offered immunotherapy

^b **Candidate for Bevacizumab** patients with non-healing wound/fracture, major surgery in the prior 4 weeks, bleeding disorder or coagulopathy, recent history of GI perforation, unstable cardiac condition (e.g., uncontrolled HTN, arterial thromboembolism, symptomatic CHF (NYHA II-IV) or arrhythmia), or active cocaine use are not candidate for bevacizumab treatment; screening/management of esophageal varices should be done in consultation with gastroenterology/hepatology

Hepatocellular Carcinoma – Advanced Child A Second Line



Clinical trial(s) and shared decision making always considered on pathway. For assistance finding a clinical trial, email CancerClinicalTrialsNavigation@va.gov.

Hepatocellular Carcinoma – Molecular Testing Table

Eligibility	Test Category	Test Type	Recommended Vendors	NPOP Coverage	Specimen Type
Hepatocellular Carcinoma	No molecular testing is currently required for standard prognostication and therapy.				