Einleitung: Programmed necrosis (necroptosis), a newly discovered form of the cell death is mediated by Receptor-Interacting Protein (RIP1) and plays a pivotal role after myocardial, renal, and cerebral ischemia-reperfusion (I/R). The relevance of necroptosis in the postischemic liver remains, however, unclear. The aim of this study was to analyze the role of programmed necrosis during hepatic I/R.

Material und Methoden
Under inhalation anesthesia, C57BL6 mice were subjected to warm hepatic I/R (90min/240min). The animals were pretreated either with the RIP1 inhibitor necrostatin-1 (Nec-1, 3.5µg/kg) or vehicle (Nec-1_inactive, 3.5µg/kg) administered systemically prior ischemia. Sham-operated animals served as controls (n=6 each group). The inflammatory response was evaluated by intravital microscopy. The hepatic transaminases ALT/AST in plasma as well as the activity of caspase-3 in tissue were determined as markers of hepatocellular injury.

Ergebnisse
Leukocyte recruitment to the liver (21±2 rolling leukocytes/mm²s and 215±22 adherent leukocytes/mm²), sinusoidal perfusion failure (19±2% non-perfused sinusoids) as well as the transaminase activities (AST 9758±2408, ALT 2072±657 U/L) were strongly increased upon I/R as compared to the sham-operated mice. Inhibition of the RIP1-dependent pathway with Nec-1, however, did not attenuate I/R-induced leukocyte migration, perfusion failure, and hepatocellular injury. Western-Blot analysis showed a baseline RIP1 expression in livers from sham-operated mice, whereas RIP1 expression was not detectable in both Nec-1-treated and vehicle-treated I/R group. Caspase-3 activity was significantly elevated in both postischemic groups.

Schlussfolgerung
Our in vivo data show that RIP1-mediated necroptosis is not present in the liver after I/R. Since caspases are able to cleave RIP1, we suggest that I/R-triggered caspase activation negatively regulates necroptosis and, thereby, determines apoptosis as a preferred route of cell death after hepatic I/R.