

Drug Alert

Critically ill children receiving intravenous (IV) histamine (H_2) blockers should have their gastric pH values checked at frequent intervals.

For nonhospitalized children with chronic illnesses, consider the role stress plays. In children, many ulcers occur secondary to other conditions, and the nurse should be aware of family and environmental conditions that may aggravate or precipitate ulcers. Children may benefit from psychological counseling and from learning how to cope constructively with stress.

Hepatic Disorders

Acute Hepatitis

Etiology

Hepatitis is an acute or chronic inflammation of the liver that can result from infectious or noninfectious reasons. Viruses such as the hepatitis viruses, Epstein-Barr virus (EBV), and cytomegalovirus (CMV) are common causes of many types of hepatitis. Other causes of hepatitis are nonviral (abscess, amebiasis), autoimmune, metabolic, drug-induced, anatomic (choledochal duct cyst and biliary atresia [BA]), hemodynamic (shock, congestive heart failure), and idiopathic (sclerosing cholangitis and Reye syndrome). Determining the cause of acute or chronic hepatitis is important in determining the treatment and prognosis for the child (Clemente and Schwarz, 2011). Table 22-9 compares the features of hepatitis A virus (HAV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), and hepatitis C virus (HCV).

TABLE 22-9

Comparison of Types A, B, and C Hepatitis

Characteristics	Type A	Type B	Type C
Incubation period	15 to 50 days; average 28 days	45 to 160 days; average 120 days	2 to 24 weeks, average 7 to 9 weeks
Period of communicability	Believed to be latter half of incubation period to the first week after the onset of clinical	Variable Virus in blood or other body fluids during late	Begins before onset of symptoms