

# Discharge Instructions for Hepatitis C



You have been diagnosed with hepatitis C. This is an inflammation of the liver caused by a viral infection. Hepatitis C can get worse and damage your liver without your knowing it. Stay in regular contact with your healthcare provider and healthcare team. They can watch your condition and monitor for any complications. In addition, there are now very good treatments for hepatitis C. Here's what you can do to stay healthier and prevent its spread.

## Home care

- Don't put stress on your liver:
  - Don't drink alcohol. Alcohol increases the risk of having cirrhosis.
  - Ask your healthcare provider about which medicines you should not take, including over-the-counter ones.
  - Lose weight if you are overweight, especially if your medical tests showed that you have a fatty liver.
- Eat a balanced diet.
- Take medicines prescribed by your healthcare provider to try to get rid of the virus:
  - To help your liver work better, you may be given certain medicines. Most hepatitis C can be cured by taking oral medicines for a short period of time..
  - In uncommon cases, you will also take an antiviral medicine (ribavirin) by mouth twice a day.
  - It's very important that you take the prescribed medicines as directed. If you have any questions about how to take the medicines, call your provider to clarify.

## Prevention

Tips to prevent spreading hepatitis C:

- Cover all skin breaks and sores by yourself. If you need help, the person treating you should wear latex gloves.
- Use condoms during sex if you have multiple sex partners.
- Don't donate blood, plasma, sperm, body organs, or other body tissue.
- Don't share needles.
- Don't share razors, toothbrushes, manicure tools, or other personal items.

## Follow-up care

Make a follow-up appointment as directed by our staff. If your hepatitis C has caused significant liver scarring, such as cirrhosis, you will need follow up or more testing even if your hepatitis C is cured.

## When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following:

- Flu-like problems (tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, or sore muscles and joints)
- Swelling in your belly or soreness in the upper right part of the belly
- Yellowing of your skin or eyes (jaundice)
- Itching
- Dark yellow urine
- Black, tarry, or red stools or vomiting blood
- Confusion or trouble focusing
- Trouble sleeping
- Painful red rash on your legs
- Nerve damage
- Mental confusion
- Kidney problems

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