


The Trump Administration is working to reopen the government for the American people. Mission-critical activities of CDC will continue during the Democrat-led government shutdown. Certain federal government activities have ceased due to a lack of appropriated funding. During the government shutdown, only web sites supporting excepted functions will be updated. As a result, the information on this website may not be up to date and the agency may not be able to respond to inquiries.

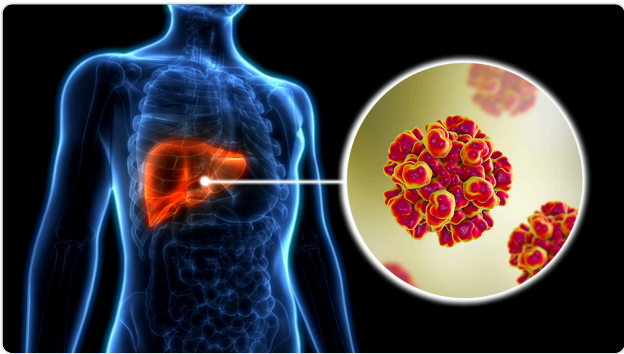


# Hepatitis E Basics

 For Everyone  
JANUARY 31, 2025

## KEY POINTS

- Hepatitis E is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis E virus (HEV).
- Hepatitis E is common in many parts of the world where sanitation is poor.
- Most people recover fully from hepatitis E without any complications.
- Hepatitis E can only be diagnosed with laboratory tests.



## About hepatitis E

Hepatitis E is a liver infection caused by HEV. Most people with hepatitis E fully recover and have no long-term liver problems from their infection.

Hepatitis E is common in many parts of the world where sanitation is poor. It is not common in the United States, where people have access to clean drinking water. Most cases in the US involve people who have recently traveled to countries where hepatitis E is common.

## Types

Most people fully recover from acute hepatitis E without any complications. In rare cases, some people with compromised immune systems develop chronic hepatitis E.

## Signs and symptoms

Many people with hepatitis E, especially young children, do not have any symptoms. Others may experience one or more of these symptoms:

- Dark urine or clay-colored stools
- Feeling tired
- Fever
- Joint pain
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea, stomach pain, throwing up
- Yellow skin or eyes (jaundice)

If symptoms occur, they usually appear anywhere from 2 to 6 weeks after exposure to HEV.

## At-risk populations

Travelers to areas of the world with poor sanitation are at greatest risk for getting hepatitis E. Certain populations are at risk for more severe outcomes due to hepatitis E, such as long-term liver problems and liver failure, including:

- Pregnant women.
- People who have had solid organ transplants.
- People with compromised immune systems.

## How it spreads

HEV is found in the stool of people infected with the virus. It's spread when someone unknowingly ingests the virus — even in microscopic amounts.

In countries with poor sanitation, people most often get hepatitis E from drinking water contaminated by feces from people who are infected with the virus. In the US and other countries where hepatitis E is not common, people have gotten sick with hepatitis E after eating raw or undercooked pork, venison (deer), wild boar meat, or shellfish.

## Prevention

No vaccine is available in the US to protect against hepatitis E. However, you can lower your risk for HEV infection by drinking only purified water when visiting countries where hepatitis E is common and by avoiding raw or undercooked pork, venison, and wild boar meat.

## Screening, testing, and diagnosis

Hepatitis E can only be diagnosed with laboratory tests. If you are having symptoms of hepatitis E, see your doctor.

## Treatment and recovery

There is no specific treatment for hepatitis E. Most people recover from hepatitis E with rest and by managing their symptoms with the help of their doctor.

### SOURCES

**CONTENT SOURCE:**  
[Division of Viral Hepatitis](#)