

Treatment

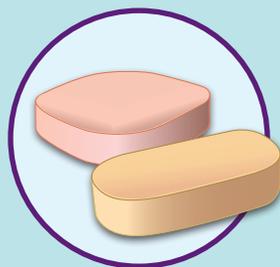
Direct acting antiviral (DAA) treatment cures hepatitis C for over 95% of people. Specialist doctors and some general practitioners and nurse practitioners can prescribe and manage these medications.

Treatment consists of tablets taken daily, for 8 to 12 and occasionally 24 weeks. This depends on previous medical history and the medication used.

Side effects whilst on treatment are uncommon. However mild side effects may include:

- headache
- tiredness
- nausea

Treatment is available to all adults with a Medicare card. There are no restrictions on who can have treatment. It is available for people who are currently injecting drugs, people in prison and people with liver damage. Treatment is usually successful even if there is scarring of the liver.



How will I know if I am cured?

A **PCR blood test** done 3 months after treatment is completed will show if the virus is gone.

If you have scarring of the liver, regular monitoring of your liver health is important even after treatment.

It is possible to get hepatitis C again if you are exposed to it after completing treatment so prevention is still important.

Keeping your liver healthy

The LiverWELL app developed by Hepatitis Victoria has lots of tips on how to keep your liver healthy:

-  **eating well:** cut back on foods that are high in fat and high in sugar
-  **getting active:** do some exercise everyday
-  **feeling well:** take care of yourself emotionally, spiritually and physically
-  **drink aware:** cut back on how much alcohol you drink or try to stop altogether.

For information and practical tips on managing your liver health, visit: www.liverwell.org.au or download the **liverWELL app**

LiverWELL®



Finding support

Websites

www.befreefromhepc.org.au www.hepvic.org.au
www.liverwell.org.au www.cancervic.org.au
www.loveyourliver.com.au www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au
www.quit.org.au

HEPATITIS VICTORIA

Hepatitis Infoline: 1800 703 003

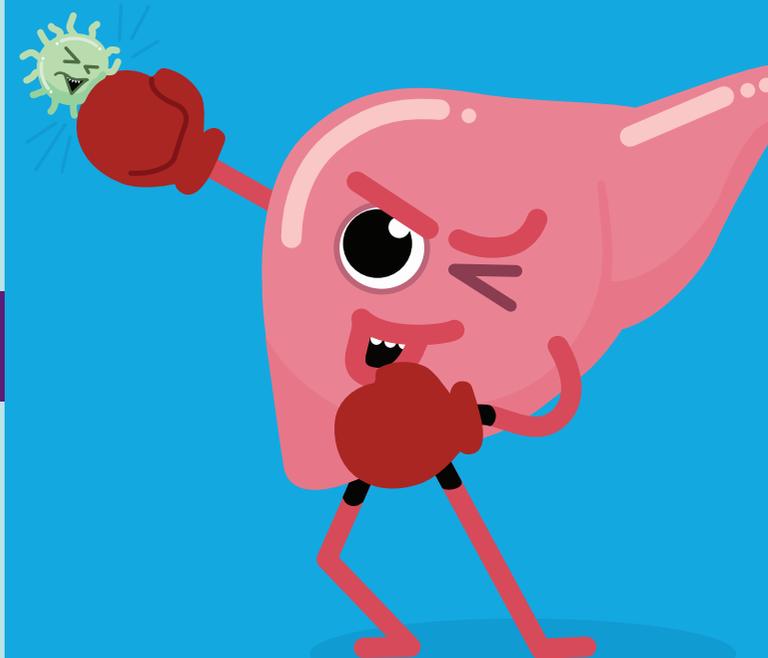
www.hepvic.org.au info@hepvic.org.au

Hep Connect: Talk to a lived experience volunteer

www.hepvic.org.au/page/73/hepconnect

Produced by Hepatitis Victoria. This information is general in nature and not intended as medical advice. Consult your doctor for further information.

Hepatitis C



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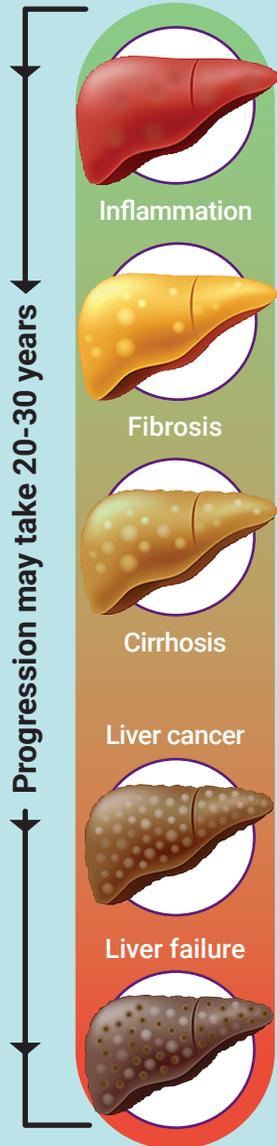
LiverWELL

What is hepatitis C?

How do you get hepatitis C?

Testing

Your Liver



Hepatitis C is a blood borne virus that causes inflammation of the liver.

If untreated, hepatitis C can cause scarring and hardening of the liver tissue. This is called fibrosis. Bad scarring is called cirrhosis. This scarring means the liver cannot work properly.

Untreated hepatitis C increases the risk of liver failure and liver cancer.

Symptoms

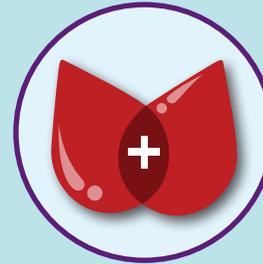
Often people living with hepatitis C feel no symptoms. However, symptoms may include:

- feeling tired
- nausea and low appetite
- flu like symptoms
- jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes)
- abdominal pain the liver area (behind ribs on the right side of your belly)

The good news!

Australia has safe, affordable and effective treatment that cures hepatitis C for most people.

Hepatitis C is transmitted by blood to blood contact. This means that the blood of someone living with hepatitis C gets into someone else's blood.



Risks include:

- sharing injecting equipment
- unsterile tattoos and piercings
- blood transfusions and medical procedures overseas
- blood transfusions in Australia before 1990

Lower risk

- needle stick injuries
- blood to blood contact in fights
- sharing razors and toothbrushes
- mother to baby during pregnancy
- sexual contact involving blood exposure

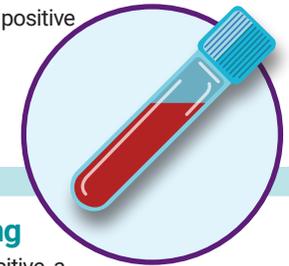
Hepatitis C is not transmitted by:

- sneezing
- kissing
- coughing
- hugging
- sharing food or eating utensils
- blood transfusions and medical procedures in Australia after 1990 (due to testing of all donated blood)

Testing for hepatitis C involves getting one or two blood tests. Any doctor can organise these blood tests.

Antibody test

Initial testing for antibodies will show if you have ever been exposed to the virus. 25% of adults will get rid of hepatitis naturally. However, they will always have antibodies, even though the virus is completely gone. Being positive to antibodies does not mean you are definitely hepatitis C positive.



Secondary testing

If antibody testing is positive, a secondary test will then be done, - this is called a PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test. This test shows if you currently have the virus or not.

How much of the virus is in the blood as well as the strain (genotype) will be tested.

Fibroscan

If there is evidence of liver scarring a fibroscan may be recommended. This is a quick, easy and painless test which measures liver stiffness giving an indication of how much scarring your liver has.

