

# WHAT IS HEPATITIS?

A PUBLICATION OF THE  
HEPATITIS C SUPPORT PROJECT

## Symptoms Transmission Prevention

There are over 100 causes of hepatitis, but if it is caused by a virus it is given a letter, such as hepatitis A, B, or C. The hepatitis C virus can cause ongoing (chronic) infection. Many people with HCV do not get sick, but some people can develop serious health problems, especially after 10, 20, or 30 years.

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The information in this brochure is designed to help you understand and manage HCV and is not intended as medical advice. All persons with HCV should consult a medical provider for diagnosis and treatment of HCV.

This information is provided by the Hepatitis C Support Project, a non-profit organization for HCV education, support and advocacy.

For more information  
about hepatitis C visit:

The Hepatitis C Support Project  
[www.hcvadvocate.org](http://www.hcvadvocate.org)

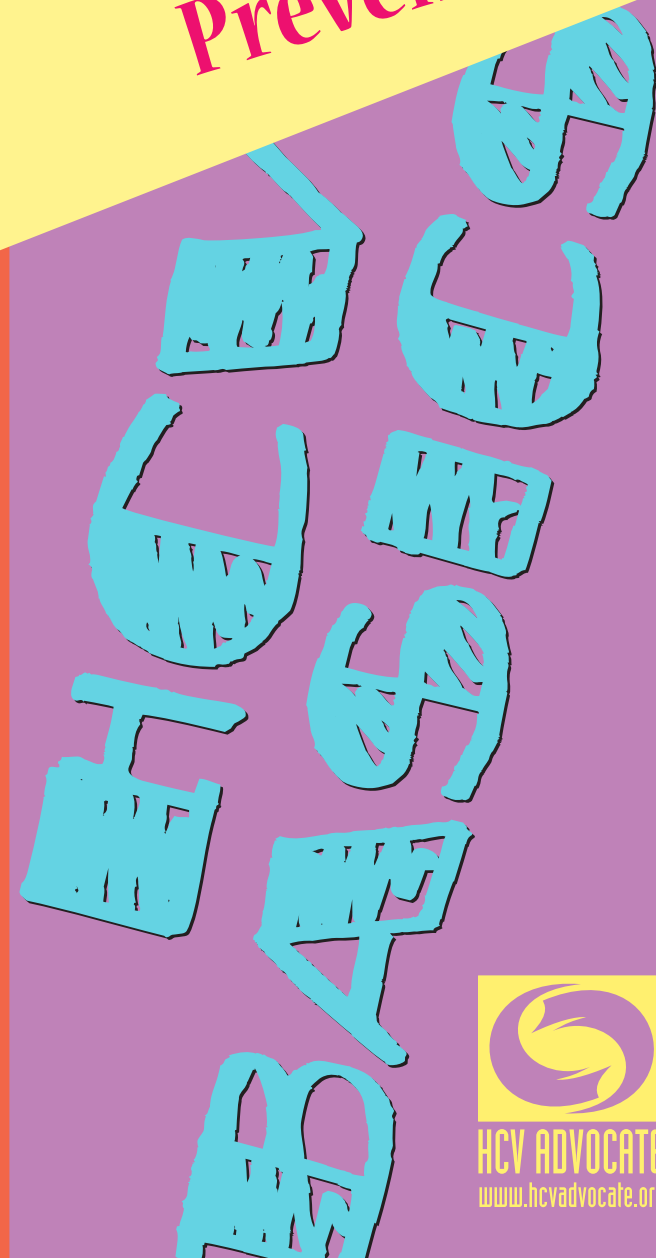
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## HEPATITIS MEANS...

## “INFLAMMATION OF THE LIVER”



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# STAYING HEALTHY TIPS

- See your health-care provider for regular check-ups.
- Eat a healthy and balanced diet.
- Rest when you are tired.
- Exercise regularly.
- Get the hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccines if you are not already protected.
- Stop or cut down on alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes.
- Try not to worry too much.

# SYMPTOMS

Many people with HCV have no symptoms. The most common symptoms include feeling tired (fatigue) or having muscle and joint aches or nausea. Some people say the symptoms feel like they have a mild case of the flu.

**Are you a Baby Boomer born between 1945 and 1965?**  
If so, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that **YOU** should have a one-time test for hepatitis C! Talk to your doctor – it just might save your life!

# TRANSMISSION PREVENTION

HCV is spread by direct blood-to-blood contact.

- Don't share needles, syringes, or works (cooker, cotton, ties, pipes, straws, water).
- Don't share personal items like razors, nail clippers, toothbrushes or pierced earrings.
- Make sure tattoo and body piercing equipment is sterilized—only new needles and a separate ink pot.
- Cover open sores or wounds.
- Sexual transmission is uncommon; safer sex—using latex condoms—can reduce the risk.
- A mother can transmit HCV to her baby during pregnancy, but this doesn't happen very often, and breastfeeding is ok.

# TREATMENT

Everyone with hepatitis C should talk with their medical provider about treatment.

Treatment can cure hepatitis C in up to 9 out of 10 people who take the medicines to treat hepatitis C, and being cured can help you to live longer and feel better.

Everyone has the right to be treated and cured.



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**GET TESTED. GET TREATED. GET CURED.**