What is Hepatitis?

Hepatitis means...

“inflammation of the liver”

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

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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.

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.

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!

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.