

Easy B Facts

Taking HBV Medicines

There are two types of medicines used to treat chronic or long-term hepatitis B (HBV for short) – antiviral pills that work by blocking the hepatitis B virus from making more copies of itself (replicating), and interferon, which boosts the immune system to help fight HBV.

Interferon does not cause drug resistance, but some of the HBV pills can cause drug resistance which could mean that the drug no longer works against HBV. Your doctor/nurse will instruct you on how to take the HBV medicines – how many, how often and if you need to take them with food.

It is very important that you follow the doctor's instructions carefully because...

- HBV medicines are more likely to work if all of the medicines are taken
- It will help to prevent HBV from developing drug resistance. Drug resistance can develop when the full dose of the drug is not strong enough to kill all of the virus
- If you stop taking the medicines or reduce the amount of drug taken, this could lead to a 'flareup' or worsening of the damage to the liver
- Make sure to follow the doctor or nurse's instructions about whether you should eat food when you take the pills

Drug resistance is when the hepatitis B virus is able to 'resist' and 'escapes'. In other words the drug will no longer work to stop the hepatitis B virus from replicating or making more copies of itself.



HBV ADVOCATE

www.hbvadvocate.org

**Hepatitis C
Support Project**

VERSION 5 • September 2016
Alan Franciscus