

EASY C FACTS

What Is ALT?

There are many different kinds of blood tests to tell a doctor if the liver is damaged. One of the most common blood tests used will measure alanine aminotransferase (ALT for short) levels in your blood. ALT's are chemicals that are released by the liver into the blood when the liver is damaged or sick. **High levels of ALT can be caused by many things like alcohol, drugs, toxins, and viruses such as hepatitis C (HCV or**

Hep C for short).

Unfortunately, it is not a perfect test for people with HCV – most people with normal ALT levels will have little damage, but some people can still have ongoing liver damage. In the past, if people with HCV had normal ALT levels, they were not treated with HCV medications; but now doctors will treat hepatitis C with HCV medications if there are other signs that the liver is damaged.

Remember.....

- ◆ If your ALT level is high it means that something is going on in the liver, but it could be caused by many things.
- ◆ Most people with normal ALT levels will not have liver damage, but for some people with HCV and normal ALT levels the liver will become damaged over time.
- ◆ If you have normal ALT's your doctor will usually not treat you with HCV medications unless you have other signs that the liver is damaged.

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