

~~UN~~HEALTHY HEPATITIS C LESSONS • PART 12



Before, During, and After Treatment

PURPOSE

To help people in your group understand all parts of treatment. Members of your group who have tried treatment may want to share what their treatment was like.

FACTS

Does everyone in your group know what drugs may be used to treat hepatitis C? Remind them that they could include:

- *Direct-acting antiviral (DAA—also called HCV Inhibitors) pills that you take each day*
- *Ribavirin pills that you take as your healthcare provider prescribes*

Using 2 or more medicines together is called combination therapy.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Why is hepatitis C treatment important?

When are treatment results final?

Where can I learn about potential side effects?

What if treatment doesn't cure or doesn't clear the virus from the blood?

Why is it important to be able to identify side effects?

What else should you know about treatment?

What if symptoms continue even after treatment?

Handout: Questions to ask your healthcare provider

Here are some sample questions and answers you can use as you like during your meeting

Why is hepatitis C treatment important?

Unless your body cures itself or clears the virus by itself, treatment is the only way to get rid of it and stop the disease from progressing. Treatment success depends on different things, such as

genotype, how much damaged has occurred to the liver.

Your doctor can explain what your treatment success may be.

What are side effects, and what if you have them?

Side effects are reactions that might happen in the body because of the treatment. Some are mild and make people feel a little differently than normal. Other side effects are serious and can make someone on treatment feel sick. And other side effects can be life-threatening.

There are even some side effects that people may not feel at all, but that a healthcare provider may notice from lab tests or physical examinations.

Having side effects doesn't always mean that people who are on treatment need to stop taking their medicines. In fact, if you do experience any side effects, do not stop treatment, but let your healthcare provider know about them right away.

Your healthcare provider can help to manage some side effects. For example, the healthcare provider might give you another medicine that makes your side effects better or easier to deal with.

NOTES

Start the conversation

Here are some questions you may want to ask your healthcare provider. This can include your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist. There is also room for other questions you may want to write down to ask. Once you ask your question, write down the answers you get so you don't have to remember what was said.

1. Why should I consider treatment?

2. What is the name of this medicine? How do you spell it?

3. What is it supposed to do?

4. What are the side effects? _____

5. How do I take this medicine? _____

6. Will this medicine work safely with the other medicines I am taking? _____

7. Should I avoid certain foods, alcohol, dietary supplements, or driving while taking this medicine? _____

8. Are there non-prescription medicines I can take instead of this medicine? _____

9. Why is this the right medicine for my condition, age, and gender? _____

10. Are there other options that I can consider? _____

11. Should I call if I have side effects? _____

12. When will I know if this medicine is or is not working?

13. When do I stop taking this medicine?

14. When is my next visit?

15. What should I do if another healthcare provider tells me to stop taking this medicine

(Other questions)
