

a series of fact sheets written
by experts in the field of liver
disease

Being an Effective Healthcare Consumer: Calling Your Healthcare Provider

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IF YOU HAVE EVER FOUND YOURSELF FRUSTRATED when trying to reach your medical provider, here are a few tips:

- In one or two sentences, write down the reason for your call.
- List the symptoms and how long you have had them.
- Have your calendar, pen, and paper available before you make the call.
- Make your call first thing in the morning.
- Write down the name of whom you spoke with. This may be a nurse, receptionist or answering service.
- Ask when you might expect a return call.
- Leave the phone number that has the best chance of getting through to you over the course of a day. For many people this is a mobile phone number. Few of us are in one place all day.
- Keep the phone line clear as much as possible.
- If the call is for a prescription refill, leave the name of the medication, the dose, amount, prescription number and the name and phone number of your pharmacy.
- If the reason for your call can be resolved with a return message, state clearly if it is okay to leave a recorded message or to give the message to someone else who answers your phone.

If your problem is serious or potentially life-threatening, call 911 or have someone take you to the nearest hospital. Examples of emergency situations that usually require an ambulance:

- Any symptom of a heart attack: severe chest pain, sweating, shortness of breath
- Severe bleeding or blood loss
- Breathing difficulties or unconsciousness
- Seizures
- Severe injury or poisoning
- Thoughts of suicide

Some useful numbers to have near the phone:

- 911
- Medical Provider
- Poison Control
- Hospital
- Pharmacy
- Health Insurance Company Medical Insurance ID card
- Social Security Number

For more information about hepatitis C, hepatitis B and HCV coinfections, please visit www.hcvadvocate.org.

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

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