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Most people never show symptoms of chronic hepatitis C (hep C) infection, **but it can still lead to serious health problems.**

CURED

THE POSSIBILITY BEGINS HERE

Visit [HepC.com](https://www.hepc.com) to learn more

\*Being cured means that the hepatitis C virus is not detectable in your blood months after treatment has ended.

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# What is hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C (hep C) is a viral infection that causes inflammation of the liver.

## Hepatitis C:

- is caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV)
- spreads when the blood from a person infected with the hepatitis C virus enters the body of someone who is not infected
- begins as an acute infection (lasting less than 6 months)
- becomes chronic (long-lasting) in more than half of people who become infected
- often doesn't present any symptoms, but can lead to serious health complications
- can be cured

**Chronic liver inflammation continually causes damage to the liver leading to fibrosis, which is the first stage of liver scarring.**

Once you have hepatitis C, the virus constantly replicates, making copies of itself trillions of times every day. These new copies of the virus continue to attack the liver cells, causing inflammation, which can lead to scarring. The scarring can lead to serious liver damage, including cirrhosis (pronounced si-roh-sis) and potentially liver cancer.

**If you think you may be at risk for hep C, it's important to talk to your doctor about getting tested.**

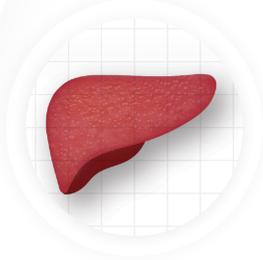
# STAGES OF LIVER DAMAGE

This chart shows the different stages of liver fibrosis. Your healthcare provider uses the fibrosis score to determine the extent of liver scarring based on several factors.

**F0**

Healthy

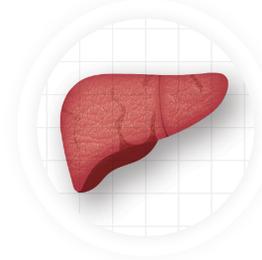
**F1**



**Mild**

Scar tissue is present

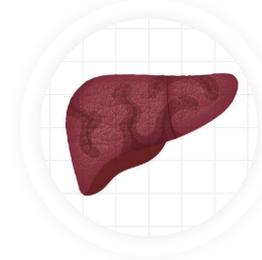
**F2**



**Moderate**

Scar tissue starts to connect

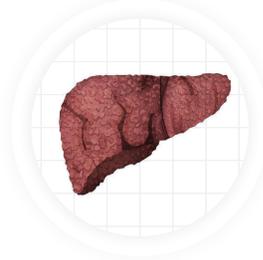
**F3**



**Severe**

Scar tissue has spread to the point where structure is affected

**F4**



**Cirrhosis**

The liver is taken over by scar tissue and may not be able to do its job

**Fibrosis** (liver scarring) over time can lead to **Cirrhosis** (more scar tissue than liver tissue)

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# Can you “catch” hep C?

The hepatitis C virus is spread when blood from a person infected with the hepatitis C virus enters the body of someone who is not infected. This can happen in different ways:

-  Sharing needles, syringes, or other equipment to inject drugs
-  Blood transfusions and organ transplants (before 1992)
-  Needlestick injuries in healthcare settings
-  Sexual contact with someone who has HCV
-  Mother-to-child transfer at birth
-  Exposure to blood containing HCV that has not been cleaned up
-  Tattoos or body piercings done with contaminated needles or by a nonprofessional
-  Sharing personal items like razors, toothbrushes, or nail clippers that may have come in contact with blood containing HCV

# Who should get tested for hepatitis C?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends hepatitis C testing for:

**All adults aged 18 years and older or any person who requests hepatitis C testing should receive it.**

## In addition:



- All pregnant women during each pregnancy
- Children born to mothers with HCV infection



- People who received an organ transplant, transfusion of blood, or blood components before July 1992
- People who were notified that they received blood from a donor who later tested positive for HCV infection



- Anyone who has injected drugs and shared needles, syringes, or other drug preparation equipment at least once, even if it was many years ago



- Healthcare, emergency medical, and public safety personnel after needle sticks, sharps, or mucosal exposures to HCV-positive blood



- People who are receiving hemodialysis



- People who received clotting factor concentrates produced before 1987
- People with HIV
- People who have abnormal liver tests or liver disease

## The CDC recommends regular testing for:

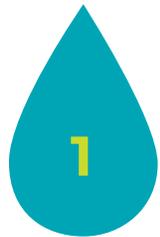
- People who currently receive maintenance hemodialysis
- Anyone who currently injects drugs and shares needles, syringes, or other drug preparation equipment

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# How will I be tested for hep C?

There are several blood tests that doctors can perform to find out if you have hep C, including:

- The hep C antibody test, which can tell if you've ever been infected with the virus.
- The hep C virus RNA test, which can tell if you have a current infection. RNA is the virus's genetic material.



**Antibody test**

→  
if test is positive



**Confirm if virus is present**



Watch Tim's story about what it's like **LIVING WITH HEP C** by clicking [here](#)

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Not only can patients with **HEP C BE TREATED, BUT THEY CAN ALSO BE CURED.**

A patient is considered cured if the hepatitis C virus is not detectable in their blood months after treatment has ended.



**TALK TO YOUR  
HEALTHCARE  
PROVIDER TO  
SEE IF TREATMENT  
IS RIGHT FOR YOU.**

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# Are hep C treatments available?

Hep C medicines have changed in recent years, especially compared with older treatments that contain interferon. Today's standard of care includes treatments called "direct-acting antivirals," also known as DAAs.

## What can I expect from treatment?

Years ago, hep C treatments took a long time and required injections. Today's treatments are all oral and can be completed in as few as 8-24 weeks. Also, many of today's treatments have high cure rates of 95% or higher. A patient is considered cured if the hepatitis C virus is not detectable in their blood months after treatment has ended.

\*Treatment duration depends on several factors, such as genotype.



**HIGH CURE RATES**  
of 95% or greater according to clinical studies



**FEWER SIDE EFFECTS**  
vs older interferon-based treatments



**SHORTER DURATION\***  
vs interferon-based treatments



**TAKEN BY MOUTH ONLY**



# NEXT STEPS

## BEFORE YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER APPOINTMENT



### Complete

Discussion Guide  
on the next page



### Share

your completed  
Discussion Guide with  
your healthcare provider



### Ask

your healthcare provider  
if getting treated is an  
option for you

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Other questions?  
Answers are a click away.

**Visit [HepC.com](https://www.hepc.com)**

# Questions to ask your healthcare provider

Now that you're taking action towards addressing your hep C, consider taking this list with you to make the most of your next appointment.

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- How can I get tested for hepatitis C?
- When will I get my test results?
- What are my treatment options?
- Will I need a referral to a specialist to get treated?

You might also want to consider **writing down any concerns or questions** you have that are not on this list before your appointment.

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