

Answer these questions before reading the booklet

MIN: _____

Circle the correct answer from the following:

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- c- Being spat on
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3. What are the chances of cure for hepatitis C after being treated with direct acting antivirals (DAAs)?

- a- Hepatitis C can't be cured
- b- Not very common (around 25% or less)
- c- Reasonably common (around 50%)
- d- Very good (around 90% or more)
- e- Don't know

4. Is it possible to be reinfected with hepatitis C after cure?

- a- Yes
- b- No
- c- Don't know

5. How willing are you to be checked out for hepatitis C?

- a- Very willing
- b- Somewhat willing
- c- Not willing at all

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HEP C & YOU

Peer Education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



UNSW
SYDNEY



Kirby Institute



Hepatitis
NSW



Health
Justice Health &
Forensic Mental Health Network



ashm
Supporting the HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health V

NUAA
NSW USERS
AND AIDS ASSOCIATION



Health

This prison-focussed education material was developed in a collaboration between the Kirby Institute, University of New South Wales, the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM), and the Australian Injecting & Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL). The project was supported in part by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) through the Centre of Research Excellence in Prisoner Health, the Surveillance and Treatment of Prisoners with hepatitis C (SToP-C) Partnership, and the Commonwealth Department of Health & Ageing.

“Hepat”

means liver

+

“itis”

means inflammation

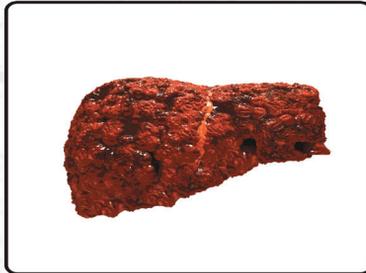
“Hepatitis” just means INFLAMMATION (damage) of the LIVER. A healthy liver can become inflamed, causing yellowing of the eyes (jaundice), loss of appetite, and pain in the tummy

Cirrhosis

=

Yellowing disease

When the liver is always inflamed, it becomes badly scarred with very little normal tissue left. This is called cirrhosis. When the liver is cirrhotic it can stop working properly - again causing jaundice, and may develop liver cancer.



WHERE IS YOUR LIVER AND WHAT DOES IT DO?



Location:

The liver is in the upper right hand corner of the abdomen, underneath the rib cage.

Function:

You would not be able to live without your liver.

- It stores key vitamins and minerals
- Cleans the blood of toxins
- Breaks down the food you eat
- Stores sugar supplies & builds new proteins

MAJOR CAUSES OF CHRONIC LIVER DISEASE



Heavy alcohol intake



Hep B and C viruses



Fatty liver (build-up of fat in the liver)

THINGS THAT MAKE LIVER DISEASE WORSE



Drinking too much alcohol



Getting infected with a virus such as Hep B and C viruses



Eating too many fatty foods

PRACTICAL TIP: What can I do? Limit alcohol. Maintain a healthy body weight. Ask the nurse to get tested for hepatitis

WHAT TESTS FOR LIVER DISEASE SHOULD YOU HAVE?

LIVER FUNCTION TESTS (LFTS) ARE BLOOD TESTS

LFTs measure chemicals called enzymes in the blood.

High levels of enzymes tell your doctor that your liver may be damaged.

Liver enzyme tests include ALT (Alanine transaminase) and AST (Aspartate transaminase)

TESTS FOR LIVER SCARRING

Previously

Liver biopsy - this test is not used any more



Now

Blood test markers

The doctors can tell if your liver is damaged by looking for markers in your blood. The doctor can calculate the ratio of different enzymes and cells in your blood. This is called an APRI score.



Fibroscan

A fibroscan is free, quick and painless. It measures how scarred the liver is. The nurse can do this in the prison clinic.

PRACTICAL TIP: What can I do? Ask the nurse about getting a fibroscan or blood test to check
8 | for liver damage.

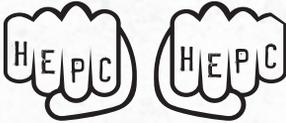
**HEP C IS A VIRUS THAT IS SPREAD
BY CONTACT WITH BLOOD. HEP C
CAN BE SPREAD BY:**



Sharing
injecting
equipment



Sharing
piercing
equipment



Sharing tattoo equipment



Blood contact in fights



Sharing razors
and toothbrushes



Unprotected sex (when blood is involved)

PRACTICAL TIP: What can I do? Get tested and treated for hep C
& get vaccinated against hep B

**WHAT IS HEP C AND HOW DO YOU
GET IT?**

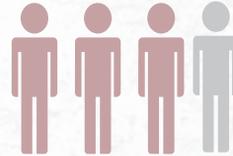
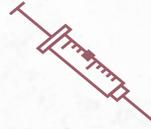
WHAT IS ACUTE HEP C?

-Acute hep C usually causes no symptoms

-One person in four gets rid of the virus naturally

-Three out of four become persistently infected

-Persistent infection is called chronic hep C



WHAT IS CHRONIC HEP C?

Hep C causes constant inflammation in the liver

Inflammation causes scarring

Build up of scarring leads to cirrhosis

Cirrhosis leads to liver cancer

WHAT ARE THE TESTS FOR HEP C?

THERE ARE TWO BLOOD TESTS:

Hep C Antibody

An antibody test tells you if you have **EVER** come into contact with the hep C virus.

Hep C RNA

A RNA test (sometimes called a PCR or viral load test) tells you if you are infected with the hep C **virus NOW**

Your results stay between you and the nurse or doctor. No one else needs to know

PRACTICAL TIP: What can I do? Ask the nurse to arrange a blood test for you

DO YOU HAVE HEP C NOW?

Ab⁺ + **PCR⁺** = You are infected with hep C NOW

Ab⁺ + **PCR⁻** = You have been infected with hep C in the PAST but do not have it now

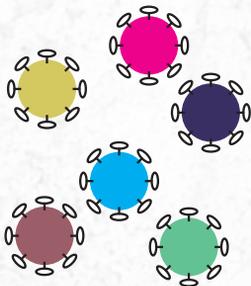
Ab⁻ + **PCR⁻** = You have NEVER been infectedd with hep C

HOW DO YOU TELL IF YOU HAVE HEP C NOW?

PRACTICAL TIP: What can I do? Ask the doctor or nurse to explain your hep C results to you.

WHAT ARE THE HEP C STRAINS?

WHAT TYPE OF HEP C DO YOU HAVE?



There are **SIX** strains of hep C called 'genotypes 1-6'



All genotypes can be cured

Your doctor or nurse will choose the best treatment no matter what your genotype, and based on whether you have cirrhosis

IS THE NEW TREATMENT ANY GOOD?

**Old
treatment
(Interferon)**



50-60% cured



24-48 weeks



Side effects

**New
treatment**



95% cured



**Direct acting antivirals (DAAs) - NEW and
EASY,**

8-12 weeks



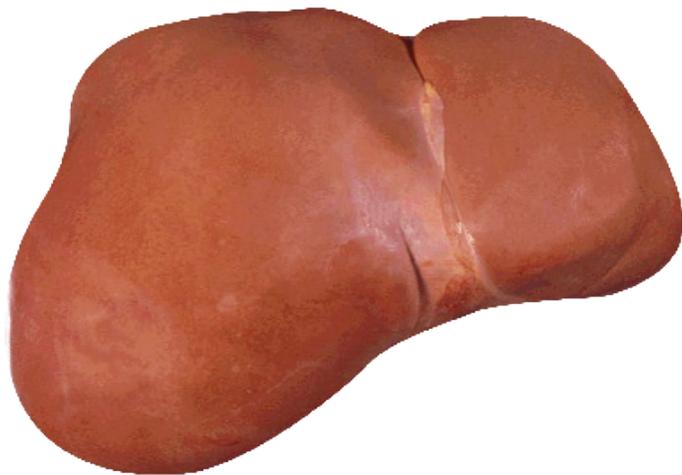
No side effects

HOW DO YOU MANAGE TREATMENT?

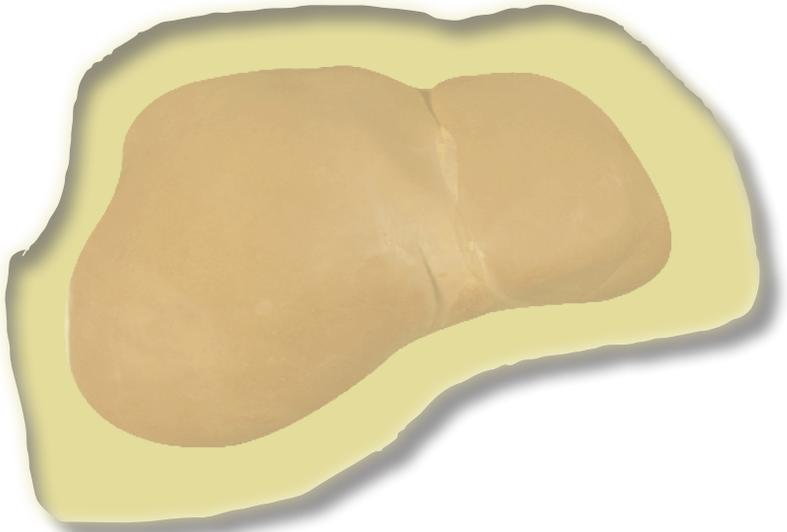


- 1 - You can take the tablets back to your cell to take each day, or get it from the nurse every day.**
- 2- Take the medication at the same time every day.**
- 3- Tell the nurse about other medications you are on.**
- 4- You can stay on treatment on the outside, or if you move. Make sure your medication goes with you.**

A HEALTHY LIVER



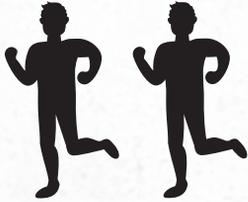
AN INFLAMED LIVER



LIVER CIRRHOSIS



WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT AFTER CURE?



More energy



Liver inflammation stops,
and scarring may slowly
improve



BUT, you are not immune
to hep C

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE VIRUS
IS GONE?

HOW CAN YOU STOP GETTING INFECTED WITH HEP C?

Don't share injecting equipment like fits and spoons

Always clean equipment with Fincol and water, including fits, spoons, filters and other equipment

Wash your hands before and after injecting yourself or someone else

Disinfect surfaces where blood might have spilled

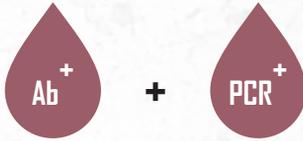
Use new tattoo needles and new inks for every person

Have regular blood tests to monitor your hep C status

Practice safe sex (like using condoms)

Don't use other prisoners' razors or let them use yours

HOW CAN YOU GET TESTED & TREATED FOR HEP C?



Find out if you have hep C. Ask the nurse to arrange a blood test



If you have hep C, ask the nurse to arrange treatment

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HEP C?

**If everyone gets treated and cured, it will stop
hep C spreading.**

**Together we can get rid of hep C and one day it
could be eliminated (no more hep C)**

Tell everyone in your yard to get treated

Call the Prisons Hep Infoline

Enter your MIN, enter your PIN, press 2 (for common calls
lis), press 3 (for Hep Infoline)

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