

Give the Gift of LIVER WELLNESS to Your Family!

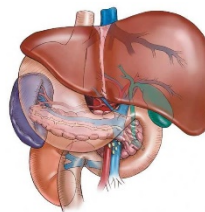
An information bulletin from HepCBC Hepatitis C Education and Prevention Society
(Please visit our booth at the Surrey Health Fair for more details and personal support!)

THE LIVER IS AN ORGAN VITAL TO LIFE

The liver is essential in

- digesting food
- filtering waste products and poisons from the body
- helping produce blood
- producing enzymes, hormones, proteins, etc. that keep the body working

If damaged or diseased, a hard-working liver will continue to work for a long time anyway, often without complaint. But finally, it develops **cirrhosis, liver cancer, liver failure, or death**. THE GOOD NEWS: If we can stop damage to the liver early enough, the liver is the only major internal organ that can REPAIR ITSELF if given a chance! Let's find out how you can protect and, if necessary, repair, ALL the precious livers in your family...



Let's celebrate a beautiful, healthy liver! It's on your right side, on top of your stomach. If your liver (or that of a loved one) might have a problem, let's get started trying to solve it today!

WHAT ARE THE DANGERS*?

Liver disease is especially dangerous for elders who have had it many decades, whose livers are now at high risk for cirrhosis and liver cancer. Liver disease is widespread throughout Canada, but is especially common among immigrants from certain countries where **hepatitis B and hepatitis C** are endemic, such as in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, Middle East, and some parts of the Pacific and Latin America. **Hepatitis A** ("hepatitis" simply means any kind of "liver inflammation"), which is rare in Canada, is spread through feces, hands, and contaminated food or drink. Fortunately, **hepatitis A** usually lasts for only a short time (it is "acute") and does not generally leave lasting or severe liver damage.



On the other hand, more dangerous liver diseases cause the liver to deteriorate and fail over time, and frequently cause terrible problems in other parts of the body as well! **Hepatitis B** and **hepatitis C** are dangerous because they often stay active in the body (they become "chronic"). **Hepatitis B and hepatitis C** can spread from mother to baby, between partners or spouses, through contaminated blood products, or through sharing unsterile medical, dental, or personal-care items (needles, razors, tattoos, acupuncture, clippers, etc.). Other common threats to the liver include **nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD)** and **nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH)**. **Alcoholic liver disease** is caused by over-stressing the liver with too much alcohol. Finally, there are less-common liver diseases such as **primary biliary cholangitis (PBC)**, **hemochromatosis**, and **hepatitis D**. ***All of these serious diseases are treatable, which means the liver damage can be controlled or in many cases, reversed. And hepatitis C is now 99% CURABLE! Many of these diseases are PREVENTABLE as well. Let's learn how!**

You can have LIVER DISEASE but not know it – Only a doctor can determine your status.



PREVENTION...

Hepatitis A and hepatitis B: Get **vaccinated** if at risk of contracting these diseases.

Hepatitis B or hepatitis C:

- Avoid sharing equipment such as razors, nail clippers, toothbrushes, electrolysis wax, needles (tattoo, acupuncture, IVDU), syringes, tattoo ink, straws or pipes for inhaling drugs, etc.
- Use condoms if there is chance of exposure (additional info available).
- **Pregnant women with hepatitis B and their newborns require very special care** to prevent transmission from mother to baby. Discuss with mother's doctor right away!

HEPATITIS B and HEPATITIS C are **NOT SPREAD BY...**

Hugging, Kissing, Sneezing or Coughing, through sharing Food or Beverages, not even through Breast Milk (unless nipples cracked and bleeding). Isn't that a relief to know?

SYMPTOMS... Usually NO SYMPTOMS



until advanced. Possible symptoms could include nausea, fatigue, confusion, irritability, weakness, poor

appetite, yellow skin/eyes, abdominal pain or swelling, edema, blood in vomit or stool. Type 2 diabetes, kidney disease, and chronic fatigue are often found with hepatitis C.

MORE INFORMATION:



TOLL-FREE: **1-844-268-2118**

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EMAIL: info@hepcbc.ca

WEB: www.hepcbc.ca TWITTER: [@hepcbc](https://twitter.com/hepcbc)

FACEBOOK: [HepCBCFace](https://www.facebook.com/HepCBCFace) YOUTUBE: [hepcbc](https://www.youtube.com/hepcbc)

TREATMENT...

Any kind of liver disease:

Always avoid alcohol and liver-damaging drugs! Get as much exercise as you can. Stay strong! Eat a normal but healthy diet. With certain liver diseases, you may need to go onto a stricter diet.

Hepatitis A: Your body will likely heal on its own.

Hepatitis B: If you have developed the "chronic" form, you need regular tests and monitoring. Your doctor will prescribe treatment when needed.

Hepatitis C: Your doctor will probably prescribe you one of the new "D.A.A." treatments. They are all oral, last 6 – 12 weeks, have almost no side-effects, and will CURE you! However, if you get re-exposed, you can get hepatitis C again.

Other liver diseases: Your doctor will probably send you to a specialist. There are treatments available for all other liver diseases, but no cures.

TRADITIONAL MEDICINE...



Ask your doctor if your traditional medicine will interfere with your new liver disease treatment. Some traditional cures can help, but others damage the liver, so please take care!

TESTING... New tests are quick, easy and good!

All types of liver disease: Ask for a Fibroscan test (quick, non-invasive) to determine degree of liver damage.

Hepatitis A, B, or C: simple blood test shows exposure; second test will show if it is still active.

Other types of liver disease: Various blood tests will help doctor determine the type of disease you have and how to treat it.

CREDITS:



Words: Cheryl Reitz, M.A., HepCBC Peer Advocate and Volunteer, gratefully cured of Hepatitis C

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ANYONE CAN HAVE LIVER DISEASE!! GET TESTED. KNOW YOUR STATUS!