

Hepatitis



What is Hepatitis?

Hepatitis refers to the inflammation of the liver. Inflammation is a tissue's reaction to irritation or injury. It generally results in pain, redness, and swelling.

There are many causes for hepatitis. Viral hepatitis is caused by a virus. It can either be acute (lasting less than 6 months) or chronic (lasting more than 6 months) and can be spread from person to person. Some types of viral hepatitis can be spread through sexual contact.

Types & Treatment:

Hepatitis A

This type only leads to a short-term infection and usually doesn't cause any complications. Your liver heals in about 2 months. You can prevent it by getting vaccinated.

Hepatitis A usually doesn't require treatment because it's a short-term illness. Bed rest may be recommended if symptoms cause a great deal of discomfort. If you experience vomiting or diarrhea, follow your doctor's orders for hydration and nutrition.

Hepatitis B

Most people recover from this type in 6 months. Sometimes, though, it causes a long-term infection that could lead to liver damage. Once you've got the disease, you can spread the virus even if you don't feel sick. You won't catch it if you get vaccinated.

Chronic hepatitis B is treated with antiviral medications. This form of treatment can be costly because it must be continued for several months or years. Treatment for chronic hepatitis B also requires regular medical evaluations and monitoring to determine if the virus is responding to treatment.

Hepatitis C

Many people with this type don't have any symptoms. About 80% of those with the disease get a long-term infection. It can sometimes lead to cirrhosis, a scarring of the liver. There's no vaccine to prevent it.

Antiviral medications are used to treat both acute and chronic forms of hepatitis C. People who develop chronic hepatitis C are typically treated with antiviral drug therapies. They may also need further testing to determine the best form of treatment.