

What is it?

Hepatitis C is a virus that affects your liver. It is spread by direct blood contact such as sharing unclean needles, unsterile tattooing, contaminated blood products or unsterile medical procedures overseas.

Hepatitis C can now be cured and treatment can be given to you by your GP. Treating hepatitis C is important as it will give you a better quality of life, improve your liver health, and reduce your risk of serious liver disease, including liver cancer.

What will my GP do now?

Your GP will check your physical health including the health of your liver. They can then set up a medication plan to treat the hepatitis C. Your GP will choose a medication that targets your specific strain of the virus. Your GP may also discuss self-care to help you improve your overall health and wellbeing.

If you have other medical problems, your GP may refer you to a specialist to oversee your treatment.

What will my GP do in the future?

Treatment for Hepatitis C is as short as 8 to 12 weeks depending on the treatment plan chosen with you. Your GP may see you during this time to make sure there are no issues. After you have finished treatment, your GP will check to see if your hepatitis C is cured.

If hepatitis C is still detectable, your GP will refer you to a specialist. Most people who follow their treatment plans and take their medication every day will clear the virus.

What questions could I ask my doctor?

- Should I see a specialist?
- How does the treatment work?
- Can I get it again if I have been treated?
- Can I donate blood?
- Who can I talk to if I need support?
- How can I keep my liver healthy?



What can I do?

Take your medication every day as directed. Missing more than one tablet per week will decrease the chance of getting rid of the virus. If you are struggling to follow your treatment plan, speak to your GP.

Once cured, it is possible to re-contract the virus. Talk to your GP about strategies to avoid getting it again.

What supports are available?

South Western Sydney Local Health District runs liver clinics for hepatitis C and other liver diseases. The clinics are at Bankstown, Campbelltown and Liverpool Hospitals. Your GP can refer you if needed.

For information and support about hepatitis C, you can contact the Hepatitis Helpline on **1800 803 990**.

Where can I learn more?

If you'd like to read more about hepatitis C, the following resources can help.

- **Hepatitis NSW** – hepatitis C treatment: hep.org.au
- **Hepatitis Australia** – hepatitis C: hepatitisaustralia.com
- **Better Health Channel** – hepatitis C: betterhealth.vic.gov.au