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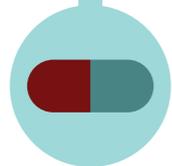
WHAT ELSE DO I HAVE TO KNOW?

Remember that the treatment for hepatitis C is a right and you can access to it even if you are actively using drugs and/or alcohol.

Your personal and clinical circumstances should be separately valued by your doctor.

Recovery will protect yours and others' health.

However, it will not protect you from becoming infected again: find out more information about HCV prevention and ask for help if you cannot do it on your own.



HEPATITIS C RECOVERY



BENEFITS FOR YOUR OWN HEALTH
(IT IMPROVES LIVER HEALTH AND OVERALL HEALTH)

BENEFITS FOR OTHERS' HEALTH
(YOU DO NOT TRANSMIT HCV)

Health care providers treating you will provide you with all the information that you need.

If you want to improve the relationship between you and the health professionals, we can help you.

Call us!

Information, support and help service for persons with HIV, viral hepatitis and other sexually transmitted infections

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gt grupo de trabajo sobre tratamientos del VIH
ENTIDAD DECLARADA DE UTILIDAD PÚBLICA
ONG DE DESARROLLO

In cooperation with:

abbvie

Information included in this document is based on the guidelines made by the European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL) and the World Health Organization (WHO)

In collaboration with the University Master in Intercultural Communication, Interpreting and Translation in the Public Services offered by the University of Alcalá

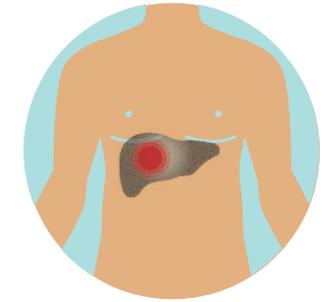
IF YOU USE OR HAVE USED INJECTING DRUGS, PLEASE, FIND OUT THE BENEFITS THAT THE TREATMENT FOR HEPATITIS C MAY BRING

HEPATITIS C IS AN INFLAMMATION OF THE LIVER CAUSED BY THE HEPATITIS C VIRUS (HCV). THIS INFECTIOUS AGENT LEADS TO THE SCARRING OF THE LIVER, WHICH PREVENTS IT FROM WORKING AS USUAL. IT MAY ALSO PRODUCE LIVER CANCER IN MORE ADVANCED STAGES.

HEPATITIS C CAN BE CURED

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ENGLISH



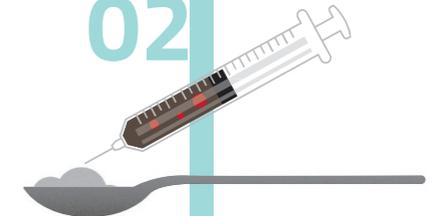
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WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

Hepatitis C is an inflammation of the liver caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV).

This infection may lead to the scarring of the liver, which prevents it from working as usual. It may also produce liver cancer in more advanced stages.

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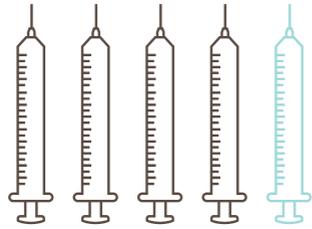


¿HOW IS HEPATITIS C VIRUS TRANSMITTED?

HCV is mainly transmitted through infected blood contact.

Sharing syringes and/or materials for the preparation of drugs –such as filters or cookers– are usual means of transmission in persons who inject drugs themselves. HCV may also be transmitted through sexual contact –when sex is carried out without a condom– and from mother to baby.

03



IS HEPATITIS C COMMON IN PERSONS WHO INJECT DRUGS THEMSELVES?

Yes. It is estimated that around 4 in 5 persons who inject drugs themselves have hepatitis C.

Using individual and sterilized material when injecting drugs and condoms during sexual activity may prevent an HCV infection.

04

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE HEPATITIS C?

In most cases, persons with hepatitis C do not have any symptoms. This means that many of them are not aware of being infected.

It is estimated that around 1 in 4 persons that use injecting drugs have hepatitis C without being aware of it. If you think you have put yourself at risk of HCV, which means that you have injected yourself with drugs or carried out unprotected sex, you may ask for an hepatitis C test in your health centre or in a drug addiction help centre.

AS PERSONS WITH HEPATITIS C WHO INJECT DRUGS THEMSELVES, CAN WE GET TREATMENT?

Yes. Persons who inject drugs themselves are entitled to treatment under the same conditions as other citizens with hepatitis C.

This treatment is recommended for persons who are actively using drugs and/or alcohol and for those who follow an opiate substitution therapy.

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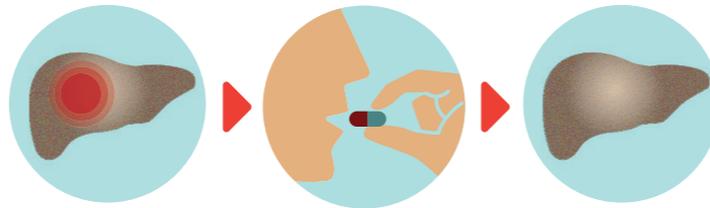
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WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE TREATMENT FOR HEPATITIS C?

The objective of this treatment is to cure hepatitis C.

Medication completely eliminates the virus from the body. Recovery will give you great benefits: on the one hand, your liver health and overall health will improve. On the other hand, you will not infect other people with the virus.

HEPATITIS C CAN BE CURED



07

WHAT DOES TREATMENT FOR HEPATITIS C ENTAIL?

It is a combination of two or more medicines which are taken orally.

This treatment is very effective and bearable, and it has very few side effects. The treatment must be followed for only 8, 12, 16 or 24 weeks.

This will depend on the characteristics of each patient. The vast majority of people using injecting drugs or under opiate substitution therapies who follow the treatment for HVC gets rid of the virus.

08

WILL TESTS BE DONE BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE TREATMENT?

Yes. Firstly, your doctor will need to value the stage of your liver by means of a painless imaging test.

He/she will need to know your type of HCV by means of a blood test (there are 6 different types of HCV, which are numbered from 1 to 6).

With all this information, your doctor will choose the treatment and duration that best suits your case. During and after the treatment, your doctor will still be checking if the treatment is working through blood tests.

09



MAY I BECOME INFECTED AGAIN AFTER HAVING RECOVERED?

Yes. One person may become reinfected with hepatitis C if he/she still puts himself/herself at risk of HCV after recovery. It is important to know how the virus is transmitted and the prevention measures available. If you have difficulties to protect yourself from hepatitis C, you can seek help. There is a network of associations and NGOs that could help you. They work in reducing the risks related to the use of drugs.

10

WHAT CAN I DO TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE TREATMENT WHILE I AM STILL GETTING IT?

It is very important to take medication as prescribed.

If you forget to take medication some day –it may happen if you are using drugs–, the treatment could stop working. Before starting the treatment, you can look for the support that you may need to take medication properly. Your family, an NGO or the risk reduction centre can be part of the support you will be needing.