

Frequently Asked Questions About **Hepatitis C**

Hepatitis C is a liver disease. It can be acute (brief) or chronic (long lasting). Acute hepatitis C lasts for 6 months or less. Chronic hepatitis C can last for the rest of your life. Acute hepatitis C can lead to chronic hepatitis C.

How Does Someone Get Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is spread by blood from 1 person to another. You can get hepatitis C from sharing needles to inject drugs. Hepatitis C can also be spread through sex or sharing personal care items, such as razors or toothbrushes. Sometimes it is spread from a mother with hepatitis C to her baby during birth.

Before 1992, hepatitis C was also spread through organ transplants and blood transfusions.

What Are the Symptoms?

Most people with hepatitis C have no symptoms. You can have the virus for many years without feeling sick. To learn more about the symptoms of hepatitis C, visit www.cdc.gov/hepatitis.

How Do I Find Out Whether I Have Hepatitis C?

The only way to learn whether you have hepatitis C is to get tested for it.

Who Should Get Tested?

- You should get tested if you:
- Are exposed to blood at your job (such as getting stuck with a needle)

- Are on hemodialysis
- Have ever injected drugs, even once
- Have HIV or AIDS
- Have liver disease or abnormal liver tests
- Received a blood transfusion or organ donation before 1992
- Were born between 1945 and 1965
- Were born to a mother who had hepatitis C

How Serious Is Hepatitis C?

Without treatment, hepatitis C can cause chronic liver disease and liver cancer. But once you know you have hepatitis C, you can take steps to help keep your liver healthy.

Are There Treatments?

Yes. Hepatitis C can be cured with antiviral medication. In some cases, your doctor may watch your liver for damage before suggesting treatment.

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Testing for hepatitis C is not part of a regular checkup, so ask your doctor about it.
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Could You Have an Alcohol Problem?

It is not always easy to spot someone who struggles with alcohol use. This can be even more true when that person is the one in the mirror. Drinking too much places you in danger in many ways. It can cause you to have accidents. It can make you more likely to get certain chronic diseases. Drinking too much can also cause problems with your job and relationships.

Take This Self-Test

Admitting you have a problem is the first step toward improving your health and your life. Answer these questions:

If you answered yes to 1 or more of these questions, your relationship with alcohol seems to cause problems in your life. Consider taking steps to quit or cut back.

Create Your Support Team

Only you can decide you are ready to change your relationship with alcohol. But talking with a doctor or other health care professional can help you look at your drinking habits and decide what steps to take.

Coming to grips with an alcohol problem often takes time. Even

after you decide to make a change, you may have mixed emotions. In fact, many people have to choose quitting more than once.

Family members and friends can support you when you have made your decision. Explain your goals and ask your supporters to help in specific ways. For instance, ask them not to drink alcohol around you. Ask them not to make new demands on you for a while.

Rethink That Drink

For more information on how to cut down on your alcohol use, visit www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov.

YES	NO	
		Moderate drinking is having 1 drink per day (if you are a woman) or 2 drinks per day (if you are a man). Do you regularly drink more than that?
		Do you experience problems at home, school or work due to drinking?
		Have you ever ended up drinking more than you planned or tried without success to cut back?
		Have you ever felt angry because others criticized your drinking?
		Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or relieve a hangover?
		Do you feel, or have you ever felt, anxious or depressed because of your drinking?



The Top 3 Health Risks in Men and How to Avoid Them

Think of your 4 closest male friends or family members. Now think of this: 1 of them may die of heart disease. Another may die of cancer. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these 2 health problems cause nearly half of all deaths in men.

The good news: Certain types of exercise can help prevent these health threats in both men and women. Here is how.



TO WARD OFF HEART DISEASE: **Move in short spurts all day.**

Walking and biking are 2 types of aerobic exercise. Aerobic exercise makes your heart stronger. It also lowers your blood pressure. The American Heart Association suggests getting at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity 5 days per week. What does "moderate" really mean? It means moving enough to cause a small increase in your heart rate and breathing rate, such as when you are walking somewhere in a hurry. But you do not have to do it all at once. Three 10-minute walks are as good as 1 30-minute walk at lowering blood pressure.

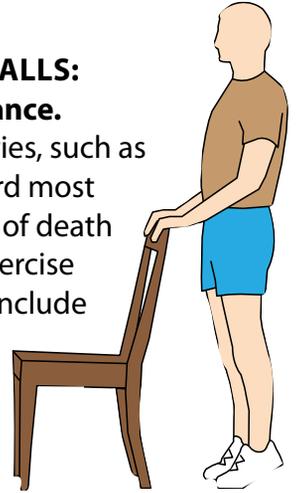
TO GUARD AGAINST CANCER: **Exercise as much as you can.**

Exercise may help prevent some types of cancer, research shows. Try to get at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week, suggests the American Cancer Society (ACS). If you can get 300 minutes of activity each week, that is even better. That may protect you even more from getting cancer, says the ACS. If that is too much, just try to do what you can.



TO PREVENT FALLS: **Train your balance.**

Accidental injuries, such as falls, are the third most common cause of death among men. Exercise programs that include balance training could prevent up to 42 percent of falls, studies show. Consider taking a class in tai chi, a martial art that helps improve balance and coordination. Or try this balance move: Stand behind a sturdy chair. Holding the back of the chair, raise up onto your toes. Pause for 1 second. Lower your heels to the floor. Repeat 10 to 15 times about 2 times a week.





Call **1-800-562-4620** to discuss any of the topics in this newsletter or any other health issues. Visit our website at **www.OHPCC.org**.

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Developed by StayWell

Quiz:

How Do You Rate on First Aid?

It takes only seconds to injure yourself. But the minutes afterward are what really matter. The quick decisions you make in the moments after an accident can add to the hurt—or help you heal.

How would you respond if the situation called for first aid? Check your first aid know-how with this quick quiz.

1. Ice a muscle sprain for up to 60 minutes at a time to ease pain.

True False

2. To stop a nosebleed, you should pinch just below the hard part of the nose while sitting up.

True False

3. It is best to soak a minor burn in ice water.

True False



Check Your Answers

1. **False.** Ice is good for sprains, but it should be used for only 20 minutes at a time. You can do this 4 to 8 times a day.
2. **True.** If the bleeding does not stop after 5 minutes, try squeezing your nose for another 20 minutes. If you are still bleeding, call your doctor.
3. **False.** Ice water can actually make a burn worse. Instead use cool water and soak for 20 minutes. This helps remove heat and slows the progression of a minor burn.