

How to get information and help...

For more information about hepatitis, call the CDC Hepatitis Hotline:

1-888-4-HEP-CDC
(1-888-443-7232)

To find out information about HIV and AIDS, or to find HIV testing sites, call:

1-800-541-AIDS (English)
1-800-233-SIDA (Spanish)
1-800-369-AIDS (Deaf/TDD)

For help quitting or reducing alcohol or drug use, call:

1-800-522-5353 (Monday – Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM)
1-800-LIFENET (New York City only – 24 hours a day)

Other Information:

Parole Officer: _____

Doctor/Hospital: _____

Support Services: _____

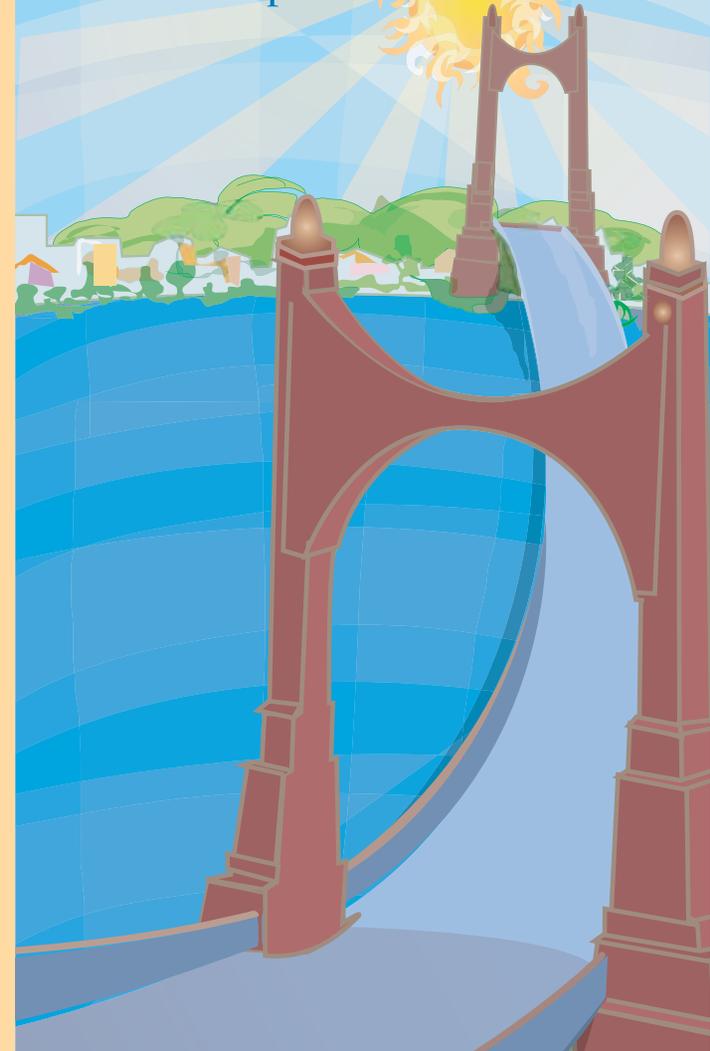


State of New York
Department of Health

Revised 9/08

Hepatitis C

What you need to know
for help on the outside



A Guide for People Enrolled in the
Hepatitis C Continuity Program

What You Need to Know

By now, you have begun treatment for hepatitis C. Hepatitis C is an illness that damages the liver. It is very important that you keep up with your treatment. While on treatment, you must keep your doctor appointments and follow all instructions given.

Keeping your appointments is not always easy. If you are having problems with this, talk to your Parole Officer. Your Parole Officer may be able to assist with locating support and assistance with needed services. If you do not have a Parole Officer, ask your doctor or health care provider for help.

How to Make Your Treatment Work Best

Treatment is not always easy because of the side effects. That is why it is important to do the following:

- Take care of yourself.
- Take your medicine when you are supposed to.
- Tell your doctor about any side effects as soon as they happen.
- Keep all your appointments with your doctor. If you have to cancel, call your doctor as soon as possible to make a new appointment.
- Write down your doctor's name and phone number and keep this information with you at all times.
- Write down the names and amounts of medicines you are taking and keep this information with you at all times.

How to Protect Yourself

Avoid alcohol: Alcohol harms your liver and will probably make your hepatitis C worse. The less alcohol you drink, the better. The best choice is not to drink any alcohol at all.

Keep yourself healthy:

- Eat a healthy and balanced diet.
- Get plenty of sleep and rest.
- Try to exercise.
- Ask your Parole Officer or doctor if there is a support group in your area.

Talk to your doctor about drugs and other medicine: Your doctor needs to know everything you take to help keep you healthy. Talk to your doctor before you take any prescription drugs, street drugs, herbal remedies or over-the-counter drugs.

Do not inject drugs: If you use drugs and you are not able to stop, it is important to get treatment. If you are injecting drugs, never reuse or share needles, syringes, or works (spoons, cotton, cookers, water). Reusing or sharing may result in you getting another disease or spreading your hepatitis to others. Your Parole Officer may assist you with getting into a drug treatment program.

Ask questions about tattoos: If you get a tattoo, make sure new equipment and inks are used.

Get hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccines: Hepatitis A and hepatitis B are liver diseases like hepatitis C. These can be very serious in someone with hepatitis C. If you have not already had these vaccines (shots), ask your doctor about them.

Always use condoms: Use a condom to reduce your risk of getting other STDs, such as HIV.

How to Protect Others

- Do not donate blood, body organs, tissue or semen.
- Do not share things that may have blood on them, such as toothbrushes, razors, and nail clippers.
- If you snort drugs, do not share straws.
- If you have any cuts or sores, cover them with a bandage.
- Clean up any blood spills right away with bleach.

Hepatitis C is not spread by:

- Sneezing or coughing
- Hugging or kissing
- Breastfeeding
- Food or water
- Sharing eating utensils or drinking glasses
- Casual contact