

Hepatitis C Treatment for Transplant Patients

Hepatitis C is a disease caused by a virus that infects the liver. Over time, it scars the liver and can lead to liver failure, liver cancer and death. The virus stays in the body unless it is treated with medicine. Hepatitis C can also cause many issues outside of the liver, such as body aches, fatigue, memory issues, as well as nerve and kidney damage.

Hepatitis C Positive Kidney Transplants

If you received a hepatitis C positive kidney transplant, assume you have Hepatitis C.

Safety Guidelines

Hepatitis C is transmitted through blood and body fluids. Therefore, there are simple safety guidelines you should follow.

- Always use a condom during sex.
- Do not share razors or toothbrushes.
- Do not exchange blood or body fluids with anyone else until you are cleared of the virus.

Treatment

There are many medicines that can treat the virus. Treatment plans are chosen for each person based on:

- type of Hepatitis C virus
- virus amount
- stage of liver disease
- kidney function
- insurance coverage

The treatment plan will include taking medicines, blood tests, and clinic visits. Your care team will review your treatment plan with you.

Side Effects

Common side effects include:

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Sleep problems
- Nausea

Treatment Tips

- Review handouts about your medicines. These will explain how to take them, what to do if you miss a dose and what to expect.
- Take all medicines as directed at the same times each day. Every dose counts!
- **Do not** start, stop, or change any medicines during your treatment without talking to your care team.
- Keep track of your medicine supply and plan ahead.
 - Call ahead for refills. Most pharmacies need a few days to get them ready.
 - Bring your medicines with you if you are coming to clinic, going to an emergency room, or being admitted to the hospital.
 - Pack extra doses of medicines when you travel.
- Report any side effects or problems with your medicines. Sometimes your treatment plan may need to be changed.
- Get blood tests. This helps to check for side effects and to see if the treatment is working.
- Complete the full course of treatment, even if your virus becomes negative while on the medicines.