

The basics

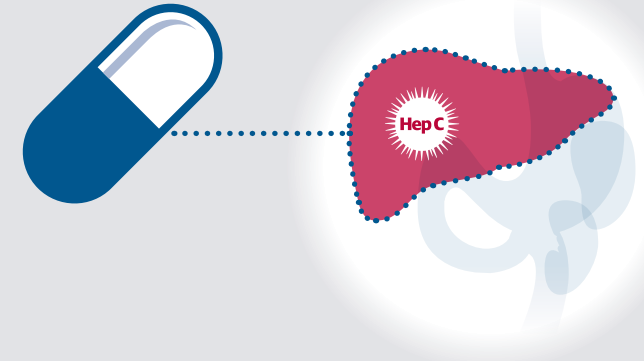
Hepatitis C treatment

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You can view a large-format version of this leaflet on your computer. Call us on 020 3242 0820.



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Notes

You can take medication for hepatitis C and HIV at the same time, but it's best not to **start** both treatments at the same time.

- **If your liver is more damaged than your immune system:**
Start hepatitis C treatment first. Take HIV treatment later.
- **If your immune system is more damaged than your liver:**
Start HIV treatment first. Add hepatitis C treatment later.
- **If you are already stable on HIV treatment:**
Continue with your HIV treatment and start hepatitis C treatment if necessary.

Some HIV drugs aren't suitable for people taking drugs for hepatitis C, but alternatives are available.

Pregnancy: the drug ribavirin can harm an unborn baby. If you or your partner has taken ribavirin in the last six months, you must use contraception to avoid pregnancy.

Want to find out more?

For more information on this topic:

- read our 'Hepatitis C', 'How hepatitis C is passed on' and 'How hepatitis C is passed on during sex' leaflets;
- visit the Hepatitis C Trust website at www.hepctrust.org.uk;
- visit the Co-Infection Alliance website at www.co-infectionalliance.org;
- phone the Hepatitis C Trust Helpline on 0845 223 4424; or
- speak to an adviser at THT Direct (phone: 0808 802 1221).

For more information about HIV

You can get free fact sheets, booklets, email bulletins and a newsletter from our website at www.aidsmap.com/resources. You can get answers to common questions at www.aidsmap.com/hiv-basics and find local services at www.aidsmap.com/e-atlas.

Contact us by calling 020 3242 0820 or by sending an email to info@nam.org.uk

Has this resource been useful to you?

Please let us know what you think by visiting our website at www.aidsmap.com/feedback, phoning us or sending an email to info@nam.org.uk. Your feedback helps us to improve the services we offer you.

You can contact us to find out more about the scientific research and information we have used to produce this leaflet.

We recommend that you discuss the information in this leaflet with a doctor or other health worker.

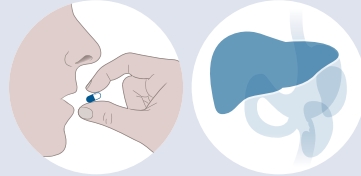
There are pros and cons to taking treatment for hepatitis C now or leaving it till later.

Reasons to take treatment now

Treatment can **improve your health and prevent damage** to your liver.



Successful treatment will **cure you of hepatitis C.**



After successful treatment, there will be no risk of **passing hepatitis C on** to someone else.



Treatment isn't for ever - usually **6, 12 or 18 months.**



It may be best to take treatment now:

if you were infected **in the last six months**, in which case treatment has more chance of success.



if your liver has already been **badly damaged** (treatment is needed urgently).

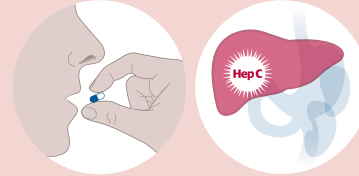


if you have a **strain** of hepatitis C (genotypes 2 or 3) that is easier to cure.



Reasons to delay treatment till later

Hepatitis C treatment **doesn't always work.**



New, better drugs will be available in the next few years.



Side effects, such as feeling tired, unwell and moody, can be severe, but they vary from person to person.

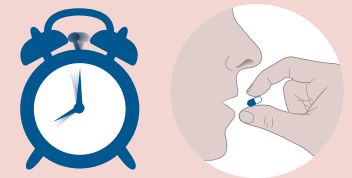


You may want to delay treatment:

if you have **other priorities** at the moment, such as work or relationships.



if you would find it hard to **take all the doses** of the drugs at the right times.



if you or your partner are **pregnant or could become pregnant** during treatment.



if you have a **strain** of hepatitis C (genotypes 1 or 4) that is harder to treat with current drugs.



Important points

● **Deciding on the best time to take treatment for hepatitis C is not straightforward.**

● **It's important to get support and advice to help you with this decision. (See 'Want to find out more?' over the page.)**