

# The ABCs of Hepatitis Fact Sheet

HEPATITIS A	HEPATITIS B	HEPATITIS C
<b>What is it?</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ A virus that causes damage to the liver</li> <li>▶ Goes away after a few weeks to several months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ A virus that causes damage to the liver</li> <li>▶ USUALLY goes away after several months</li> <li>▶ If it does not go away, it can cause liver cell damage, leading to cirrhosis (scarring) and liver cancer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ A virus that causes damage to the liver</li> <li>▶ USUALLY does NOT go away unless treated with medication</li> <li>▶ It can cause liver cell damage, leading to cirrhosis (scarring) and liver cancer</li> </ul>
<b>How is it spread?</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Eating food or drinking water that has been contaminated with infected feces</li> <li>▶ Close contact with an infected person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Contact with infected blood or sexual fluids</li> <li>▶ Sharing injection drug equipment, or tattoo and body-piercing</li> <li>▶ Needlestick from an infected person</li> <li>▶ Passed from infected mother to newborn during childbirth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Sharing injection drug equipment, or tattoo and body-piercing tools</li> <li>▶ Contact with infected blood</li> <li>▶ Sharing razors and toothbrushes</li> <li>▶ Passed from infected mother to newborn during childbirth</li> <li>▶ Spread through sex (rare with long-term partner)</li> </ul>
<b>Symptoms</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ For hepatitis A or hepatitis B, some may have light stools, dark urine, fatigue, fever, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, stomachache, and yellow skin or eyes (jaundice)</li> <li>▶ Some people don't experience any symptoms</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Most people have no symptoms</li> <li>▶ Some may feel tired and experience nausea and loss of appetite</li> </ul>
<b>Treatment</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Lots of rest and fluids</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Oral anti-viral medication or rarely, interferon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Oral anti-viral medication</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Washing hands with soap and water after using the toilet</li> <li>▶ Wear protective gloves and use 1 part bleach to 9 parts water to clean surfaces contaminated with feces, such as changing tables. Soak spill area for 1-2 minutes</li> <li>▶ Avoid contaminated food and water</li> <li>▶ Vaccination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Wear protective gloves and clean up spilled blood with 1 part bleach to 9 parts water. Soak spill area for 10-30 minutes</li> <li>▶ Do not share razors, toothbrushes, or needles</li> <li>▶ Practice safe sex: use a latex condom or barrier</li> <li>▶ Vaccination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Wear protective gloves and clean up spilled blood with 1 part bleach to 9 parts water. Soak spill area for 10-30 minutes</li> <li>▶ Do not share razors, toothbrushes, or needles</li> <li>▶ Practice safe sex: use a latex condom or barrier</li> <li>▶ No vaccine exists</li> <li>▶ Can get re-infected after being cured</li> </ul>



**U.S. Department  
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Veterans Health  
Administration