

# African Americans

## EASY C FACTS

Hepatitis C (HCV or Hep C for short) affects some groups of people differently than others. There are differences in the number of people infected with hepatitis C and how quickly or slowly Hep C damages the liver.

There are twice as many African Americans who are infected with HCV than whites who are infected with HCV. African Americans are also more likely to be infected with a certain strain of hepatitis C called genotype 1.

The good news is that

many experts believe that hepatitis C disease may advance more slowly in African Americans than in whites. The reason for this is not clear and there needs to be more information to really confirm this fact.

Currently there is a combination of 2 or 3 medications to treat hepatitis C that includes pegylated interferon (injected once a week), and ribavirin (a pill taken twice a day). Your doctor may want you to take a third drug called a protease inhibitor that is usually taken every 7 to 9 hours, and it is very important to take this drug when your doctor tells you to.

## *Remember.....*

- ◆ Talk with your doctor about ways to stay healthy.
- ◆ Try to eat a healthy diet that includes a lot of fruits, vegetables, and lean meat.
- ◆ Talk with your doctor about an exercise program that is right for you.
- ◆ Find out whether HCV treatment is what you need.

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