

EASY C FACTS

What Is Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C (HCV for short) is a virus that lives in human blood. A virus is one of the smallest living things known to exist inside plants and animals. HCV makes new hepatitis C viruses by infecting the liver, and after many years the liver can become so damaged by hepatitis C that it cannot perform many of the important jobs that it must do to keep us healthy.

You can only get hepatitis C by getting HCV infected blood from someone who has hepatitis C, and **ONLY** if that infected blood gets into your body. If you have hepatitis C you should make sure that your blood does not come into contact with someone else's blood.

Remember.....

- ◆ Many people have hepatitis C so you are not alone. It takes many years for hepatitis C to cause damage to the liver and to make someone sick.
- ◆ There are many things that people can do to help fight hepatitis C, and the best time to start is early – before hepatitis C has a chance to damage your liver.
- ◆ One of the most important things you can do is to stop or cut down on drinking alcohol.
- ◆ There are also medicines to get rid of hepatitis C that work in about 5 out of 10 people treated.
- ◆ Talk with your doctor about ways to stay healthy and about the medications that can rid the body of hepatitis C, and if they can help you.

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