

HCV Medicines

You and your doctor have decided to treat your hepatitis C (HCV or Hep C for short). This usually means taking 2 or 3 drugs. One drug is peg-interferon. You will learn how to give yourself a shot of peg-interferon under the skin.

The second drug is a pill called ribavirin. You will take

ribavirin pills twice a day with food.

If your doctor wants you to take a third drug, it will be a protease inhibitor. It is very important that you follow your doctor's directions about how often to take it—it is usually taken every 8 hours or three times a day.

Remember.....

- ◆ Store peg-interferon and other drugs that need it in the refrigerator.
- ◆ Keep medicine and needles in the container they came in and out of children's reach.
- ◆ Do not use drugs that have expired.
- ◆ Everyone can forget to take their medicine, especially Hep C meds. Find ways to remind yourself. Weekly pill containers and calendars can help you keep track.
- ◆ Learn about the side effects of the drugs. Your doctor or nurse can help you with the side effects.
- ◆ Ribavirin can cause birth defects. See *Easy C Facts: Ribavirin Warning*.
- ◆ Make sure you keep all your doctor appointments and get all of your lab tests done.
- ◆ Use a special container to throw away used needles. Your pharmacist or doctor will tell you how to get rid of these safely.
- ◆ Find out about programs available that can help and support you during treatment.

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