

HCV Medicines

You and your doctor have decided to treat your hepatitis C (HCV or Hep C for short). This usually means taking 2 drugs. One drug is pegylated interferon.

It needs to be injected (under your skin) once a week. You will be taught how to do this. The second drug is a pill called ribavirin. You will take ribavirin pills twice a day with food.

Remember.....

- ◆ Pegylated interferon needs to be refrigerated. It should not get too hot or be frozen. If this happens, call your pharmacy.
- ◆ Medicine should be stored in the container it came in and stored away from children. This includes the needles.
- ◆ Before you start, check the expiration dates on the drug containers. Do not use any 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 all the side effects of the drugs and work closely with your doctor or nurse to manage them.
- ◆ Both male and female patients need to know that ribavirin can cause birth defects. See *Easy C Facts: Ribavirin Warning*.
- ◆ Make sure you keep all your medical appointments and take all of your lab tests as scheduled.
- ◆ Use a special container (sharps) to throw away used needles and talk to your pharmacist, doctor or nurse about where to dispose of the container safely.
- ◆ Find out about any patient assistance programs available to you that can provide support and assistance while on therapy.

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