

Hepatitis C can be Cured!

Get Tested,
Get Cured,
Live Your Life

WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

Hepatitis C is a virus that lives in blood and affects the liver. If left untreated hepatitis C can lead to serious liver disease or liver cancer.

It is a very slow acting virus so people may not know they have it. Blood tests will confirm whether a person has contracted hepatitis C so see your doctor about getting tested as there is a cure.

Hepatitis C is common in Australia with over 200,000 living with hepatitis C. It is also common in many countries around the world.

HOW DO YOU GET HEPATITIS C?

Hepatitis C lives in the blood. It can be passed from one person whose blood has the hepatitis C virus to another person whose blood does not have the virus.

There are a number of ways that the hepatitis C virus can be transmitted via blood:

- Blood or blood product transfusions in your country of origin at a time where screening of blood for viruses, including hepatitis C, was not undertaken
- Undergoing medical or dental procedures in your country of origin where unregulated or unsterile practices were undertaken including reuse of glass syringes
- Vaccinations or injections overseas where unregulated or unsterile practices were undertaken including reuse of glass syringes
- Participating in backyard tattooing, piercings or sharing needles.

Hepatitis C is **NOT** passed on by touching, kissing, hugging, coughing, sneezing, or sharing food or bathrooms.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Many people with hepatitis C may not be aware they have it for many years. However there are some symptoms to be aware of such as:

- Tiredness and lacking energy, or sleep problems
- Flu-like symptoms which come and go
- Mood swings, anxiety and depression

See your doctor to discuss these symptoms, as they may be indicative of other problems.

THERE IS A CURE FOR HEPATITIS C

Getting cured of hepatitis C not only reduces the risk of liver failure or liver cancer, it can improve people's quality of life and return them to their families.

There are simple, safe and effective new treatments that can cure hepatitis C. A course of tablets, taken daily for between 8 to 24 weeks, will cure hepatitis C for almost everyone who takes the treatment. The tablets have little or no side effects.

See your doctor about getting tested and treated for hepatitis C.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

This simple, effective cure for hepatitis C is now affordable as it is listed on the government's Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). This means that everyone with a Medicare card can have the hepatitis C medication for free although there is a small cost to collect the tablets at the pharmacy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

See your doctor or call the National Hepatitis information line on **1800 437 222**. If you need language assistance call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on **131 450**.