

# HEPATITIS INFECTION DISTINCTIONS

THERE ARE 5 DISTINCT VIRUSES THAT CAUSE HEPATITIS INFECTIONS; HEPATITIS A, B, C, D, AND E.

## HEPATITIS A IS A LIVER INFECTION CAUSED BY THE HEPATITIS A VIRUS (HAV). HEPATITIS A IS HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS

- Most commonly transmitted by the **fecal-oral route**, either through person-to-person contact or consumption of contaminated food or water.
- HAV infection is a self-limited disease that **does not result in chronic infection**.
- More than 80% of adults with Hepatitis A have symptoms but **the majority of children do not have symptoms** or have an unrecognized infection.
- Antibodies produced in response to Hepatitis A last for life and protect against reinfection.
- There is a vaccine available for HAV, and the best way to prevent infection is to be vaccinated.

## HEPATITIS B IS A LIVER INFECTION CAUSED BY THE HEPATITIS B VIRUS (HBV)

- HBV is transmitted when **blood, semen, or another body fluid** from a person infected with the Hepatitis B virus enters the body of someone who is not infected. This can happen through sexual contact; sharing needles, syringes, or other drug-injection equipment; or from mother to baby at birth.
- Can be an acute, or short-term illness for some, but for others, it can become a long-term, chronic infection. Risk for chronic infection is related to age at infection: approximately 90% of infected infants become chronically infected, compared with 2%-6% of adults.
- Chronic Hepatitis B can lead to serious health issues, like cirrhosis or liver cancer.
- **There is a vaccine available for HBV and the best way to prevent infection is to get vaccinated.**

THERE IS A VACCINE AVAILABLE FOR HAV, AND **THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT INFECTION IS TO BE VACCINATED.**

**CHRONIC HEPATITIS B CAN LEAD TO SERIOUS HEALTH ISSUES, LIKE CIRRHOSIS OR LIVER CANCER**

## HEPATITIS C IS A LIVER INFECTION CAUSED BY THE HEPATITIS C VIRUS (HCV)

- Blood-borne virus. Most infections occur through sharing needles or equipment for intravenous drug use.
- Develops into a chronic disease for 70-85% of those infected.
- Chronic Hepatitis C is a **serious disease** than can result in **long-term health problems, even death**. The majority of infected persons **might not be aware of their infection** because they exhibit no symptoms.
- There is no vaccine for Hepatitis C. The best way to prevent Hepatitis C is by avoiding behaviors that can spread the disease, especially injecting drugs.

## HEPATITIS D, ALSO KNOWN AS “DELTA HEPATITIS,” IS A LIVER INFECTION CAUSED BY THE HEPATITIS D VIRUS (HDV)

- Uncommon in the United States.
- Hepatitis D only occurs among people who are infected with the Hepatitis B virus because HDV is an incomplete virus that requires the helper function of HBV to replicate.
- HDV can be an acute, short-term, infection or a long-term, chronic infection. Hepatitis D is transmitted through percutaneous or mucosal contact with infectious blood and can be acquired either as a coinfection with HBV or as superinfection in people with HBV infection.
- There is no vaccine for Hepatitis D, but it can be prevented in persons who are not already HBV-infected by Hepatitis B vaccination.

## HEPATITIS E IS A LIVER INFECTION CAUSED BY THE HEPATITIS E VIRUS (HEV)

- Hepatitis E is a self-limited disease that does not result in chronic infection.
- Rare in the United States, however Hepatitis E is common in many parts of the world.
- Transmitted from ingestion of fecal matter, even in microscopic amounts, and is usually associated with contaminated water supply in countries with poor sanitation.
- There is currently no FDA-approved vaccine for Hepatitis E.

**THE MAJORITY OF HEPATITIS C INFECTED PERSONS MIGHT NOT BE AWARE OF THEIR INFECTION BECAUSE THEY EXHIBIT NO SYMPTOMS.**