

ACUTE: a rapid-onset, short-term initial stage of a disease.

ACUTE HEPATITIS: the initial stage of viral hepatitis following infection. In HCV, acute hepatitis refers to the first six months of infection.

ANEMIA: reduced number of red blood cells or reduced ability of blood to carry oxygen. There are several types of anemia, all with different causes. Symptoms may include fatigue, weakness, pale skin, and difficulty breathing.

ANTIBODY: a protein produced by the immune system when a foreign substance enters the body. The presence of antibodies is an indicator of a past or possibly current infection. HCV antibodies are written as anti-HCV. The test for anti-HCV must be followed by other laboratory tests in order to confirm the diagnosis. The antibody test alone is not sufficient to make a diagnosis of chronic HCV infection.

ALANINE AMINOTRANSFERASE abbreviation for ALT: ALT is an enzyme produced inside liver cells. It is frequently elevated in people with chronic HCV infection. Serum ALT levels are measured using a common blood test.

ASYMPTOMATIC: not feeling or showing outward symptoms or signs of a disease.

BIOPSY: a procedure in which a sample of cells or tissue is taken for examination in a laboratory. In HCV, liver biopsies are used to monitor the health of the liver.

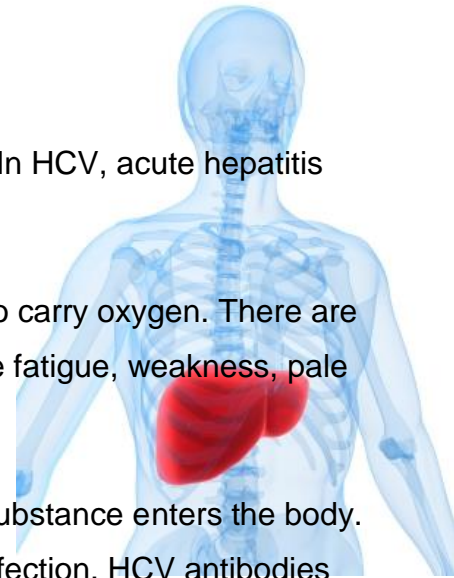
BLOOD BORNE: a pathogen/virus that is transmitted through direct blood-to-blood contact.

CHRONIC LIVER DISEASE: a long-term or persistent liver disease that may lead to progressive destruction of the liver.

CIRRHOSIS: a type of liver damage in which normal liver cells are replaced with scar tissue. In cirrhosis, liver function is severely impaired and scar tissue interferes with normal blood flow through the liver.

COINFECTED: refers to infection with two or more different disease-causing organisms.

EFFICACY: effectiveness; the ability to achieve a desired effect.

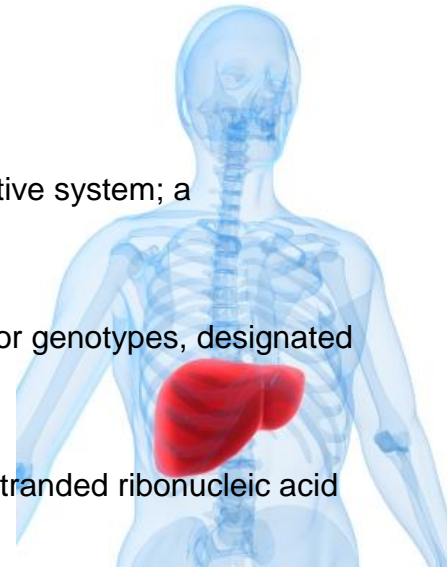


FULMINANT HEPATITIS: a severe, life-threatening form of hepatitis.

GASTROENTEROLOGY: the medical specialty that deals with the digestive system; a gastroenterologist treats digestive diseases.

GENOTYPE: genetic variation in the structure of HCV. There are six major genotypes, designated by the numbers 1 through 6.

HCV RNA: the genetic material of the hepatitis C virus. HCV is a single-stranded ribonucleic acid (RNA) virus.



HEMOPHILIA: a hereditary disease in which a person does not produce sufficient blood clotting factors and is prone to prolonged bleeding.

HEPATIC: relating to the liver.

HEPATITIS: inflammation of the liver. Hepatitis may have various causes, including viruses, toxins, and heavy alcohol consumption.

HEPATOCELLULAR CARCINOMA (HCC): a type of primary liver cancer seen in some people with long-term liver damage due to chronic hepatitis C or hepatitis B.

HEPATOLOGY: the medical specialty that deals with the liver; a hepatologist treats liver disease.

HEPATOTOXICITY: toxic or poisonous to the liver.

HISTOLOGICAL: refers to bodily tissue. In HCV, histological improvement means improvement in liver tissue, either reduced inflammation or reduced fibrosis.

INTERFERON: a naturally occurring protein in the human body produced by the immune system. Interferon interferes with viral replication. Genetically engineered products based on the natural protein have been developed by several pharmaceutical companies, and are approved for the treatment of chronic HCV infection.

JAUNDICE: yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes due to high bilirubin levels in the blood. Jaundice is often a sign of liver damage or gallbladder disease.

LIVER: a large organ on the upper right side of the abdomen that plays an important role in the metabolism of sugars and fats, synthesizes several proteins, and filters toxins from the blood.

NON-NUCLEOSIDE REVERSE TRANSCRIPTASE INHIBITOR (NNRTI): an antiviral drug that suppresses viral replication by interfering with the action of the reverse transcriptase enzyme. Ribavirin is an NNRTI.

PEGYLATED INTERFERON: a form of interferon that has a long half-life in the body and can be injected less often (typically once per week). Pegylated interferon is approved for the treatment of HCV.

RIBAVIRIN: an antiviral medication that is used in combination with interferon for the treatment of chronic HCV infection.

RIBONUCLEIC ACID (RNA): a single-stranded nucleic acid that encodes genetic information. The presence of viral RNA in the blood indicates that a virus is actively replicating. Hepatitis C is an RNA virus.

SUBCUTANEOUS : underneath the skin; usually refers to a drug injected under the skin.

SUSTAINED RESPONDER (SVR): a person, who maintains a long-term response to treatment. In HCV, a sustained responder has a long-term beneficial result from HCV treatment (non-detectable HCV RNA) that persists after treatment has been stopped (six months is the generally accepted time interval).

TRANSMISSION: spread of a pathogenic organism from one person to another.

TRANSPLANT: surgical transfer of an organ from one person to another.

VIRAL LOAD: the amount of virus (i.e., the HCV RNA level) that can be measured, usually in the blood.

VIRUS: a microscopic infectious particle that invades a living organism and makes copies of itself (viral replication).

