



DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Managing Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is a blood-borne virus that affects the liver. Asking the right questions during your conversation with your doctor will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate this condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

Cirrhosis	Scarring of the liver, which stops it from functioning properly. Cirrhosis usually develops over a period of many years. It can be caused by viruses but also by other things like alcohol use.
Chronic Infection	The phase of an infection where the disease is present for a long time. It may be progressing slowly, but the symptoms are generally less serious than an acute infection.
Acute Infection	Relatively rare for hepatitis C. Where present, it causes symptoms such as decreased appetite, joint pain, and weight loss. Most people with acute infections of hepatitis C will eventually develop chronic hepatitis C.
Jaundice	Can occur when the liver is damaged or not functioning fully. The eyes and skin may become yellow or green. It is caused by a buildup of bilirubin in the blood.
Ascites	A build-up of fluid in the abdomen.
Hepatocellular Carcinoma	A type of liver cancer that is much more common in people with cirrhosis. Having both hepatitis B and hepatitis C can make this type of cancer even more likely.
Direct Acting Antivirals (DAA)	A relatively new type of medication that can be used to treat, and even cure, hepatitis C infections.
Interferon-Alfa	An older type of medication that can be used to treat hepatitis C, usually in combination with another medication called ribavirin.

