Hepatitis C and Diabetes

March 20, 2019 By Connie M. Welch

Hepatitis C can often be associated with other conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer and a variety of autoimmune disorders.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 170 million people are chronically infected with hepatitis C globally, and 347 million have diabetes.

It is reported that more than one-third of patients with hepatitis C will develop one extrahepatic condition.

Studies have shown an association between cirrhosis and glucose intolerance. Patients with hepatitis C who have cirrhosis (severe liver damage) have a higher prevalence of T2D (type 2 diabetes) due to impaired glucose tolerance.

Studies indicate as hepatitis c patients get older they have a higher risk factor for extrahepatic conditions such as diabetes.

Reports suggest that approximately 30% of patients with hepatitis C have type 2 diabetes.

How Does This Happen
When food is broken down into the cellular level apart of it is glucose which is used for fuel for your cells, this fuel is stored in the liver to be used when your body needs it.

Insulin is a hormone made by the pancreas that helps your body use glucose from the carbohydrates in the food you eat for energy and store glucose in the liver for future use. You need insulin to unlock the storage from your liver in order to access the glucose your body needs to function properly.

In the case of hepatitis C, the liver function can be damaged from the virus and not working properly which makes a problem storing and accessing the glucose your body needs.

Symptoms of Diabetes
The American Diabetes Association reports these are the common symptoms of diabetes:

- Urinating often
- Feeling very thirsty

- Feeling very hungry-even though you’re eating
- Extreme fatigue
- Blurred vision
- Cut and bruises that are slow to heal
- Weight loss, even though you’re eating more
- Tingling, pain, or numbness in the hands and feet

Treatment

- Treatment for hepatitis C should be done as early as possible to lessen the chance of liver damage and complications. Treatment will depend upon the patient’s genotype, viral load, liver condition, and other medical conditions to consider.
- Treatment for diabetes will depend on the patients type of diabetes with insulin (pills or injections) and special diet considerations.

Early diagnosis and treatment for hepatitis C and diabetes can decrease the risk of developing complications. If you have been diagnosed with hepatitis C or have any of the above symptoms, be proactive, ask your doctor about testing you for diabetes.

Have you been diagnosed with hepatitis C and diabetes? Have you had any symptoms associated with diabetes?

This entry was originally published in Life Beyond Hep C, and is reprinted with permission.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/blog/hepatitis-c-diabetes