Hepatitis C Relapse After Treatment

June 11, 2020 By Greg Jefferys

One of the saddest and most difficult things for a person who has gone through Hepatitis C treatment is to learn at the end of treatment that the treatment has not been successful. That the Hepatitis C virus has “returned”.

This is called a relapse, but what it really means is that the Hepatitis C virus was never completely removed from the patient’s system.

A Hep C treatment relapse means that at the end of the treatment there were still some live viruses somehere in the patient’s body. As soon as the treatment stopped the Hep C virus began replicating again. The Hep C virus replicates very fast, which means if there is just one surviving virus particle at the end of treatment it can create billions of new virus particles within a few days of treatment ending.

In clinical situations about one in 35 people relapse after hepatitis C treatment. That what the statistical studies say. However in my personal, real-world experience, when people follow the treatment path I suggest, the release rate is more like one in 1,000.

I will talk in more detail about why people doing Hepatitis C treatment relapse at the end of this blog post because first I would like to share an email I received today from a guy in the USA who relapsed after 8 weeks treatment with Harvoni, which he got through his doctor and his health insurance. Later I will explain why he relapsed and how I was able to help him to be completely and finally cured.

Hepatitis C Relapse After Treatment: A survivors story.

Hello Greg,

First I would like to apologize for not keeping in touch during my medication procedure. I’m not sure if you will remember me but in 2019 you helped me get the medication I needed for Hep C that I contracted in 1970. In 2018 my health insurance, Humana, approved Harvoni for only 8 weeks (56 days) but it didn’t work and I relapsed. The whole process of getting Hep C treatment through my insurance cost me thousands of dollars.

Then I contacted you and we talked through my options and you sent me an 84 day supply of SOFOSBUVIR+ DACLATAV IR and I started taking the medicine in October 2019 and finished in December 2019. Because of my past experience I wanted to wait 90 days after the end of

treatment before doing the final viral load blood test which was the Doctor's advice. Then Covid 19 arrived and the testing was delayed because the hospitals were full. I had to wait until last week to get the final tests.

Greg, I am so excited! I completed the test last Monday (06/15) and today I received a call with the results, (06/24) that I am clear of that nasty virus, thanks to you. Greg, you are an Angel in disguise after 50 years with Hepatitis C I am finally clear. Please let me know what I can do to help others, just ask.

Sincerely Appreciate You

M ####

So, it was fantastic news to receive M's email today and to know that after 50 years he was finally cured of Hep C. M. had battled with Hep C almost all his life as he caught Hep C when he was 16 years old after a blood transfusion, I will share the first email he wrote to me back in 2019.

50 Years With Hep C

Hello Greg,

I have been following you and the numerous praise reports for many, many Hep C survivors which has given me much hope. I am writing to you for your help and direction concerning how to get this gorilla off my back. I'm 65 years old and I contracted Hep C when I was 16 years after a blood transfusion, the doctor called it "Yellow Jaundice". Not Hep A and not Hep B.

I found out it was Hep C in the 1990's

Fast forward to 2008 when a doctor recommended me to be a candidate for a drug called Interferon.

After reading all of the scary side effects and the low success ratio for African Americans I decided not to allow him to experiment using my body. Then 3 years ago 12/2016 through my wife's health insurance(Humana) I was provided 8 weeks (56 days) of Harvoni but they would not provide the last 28 days of the medication.

When the treatment ended and the doctor tested my viral lob I still had the virus, that's when I started my plan B.

After my doctor wanted me to try a different drug I explained to him that my family didn't have the money and I asked him to run another test to compare how much my reading changed in 15 years, hardly any. Then I asked his medical opinion if he felt that I would put my body in grave danger if I waited to age 65 when I would have Medicare insurance. I turned 65 years young in August of this year, I have insurance but I do not trust the insurance company I hear they may want me to wait because of pre-existing conditions.

So I would like to take control of my own life and not depend on the decisions of some money-making profit-minded pharmacy company. Oh, I forgot to say my Genotype is type 1 and I would like to know your medication recommendation(Epclusa or Daclastasvir) because I want to get rid of this Gorilla.

Also, I live in Texas and wanted to ask if it is better if I take a vacation to travel to India get the Hep C meds from India or by ordering them by mail. I feel like it's time for me to take control of my life so I would really appreciate your help. Please send me your phone number and I will call.

Sincerely M####

So the two emails I have shared here are the end and beginning of M's story.

Questions About Relapsing After Hepatitis C Treatment

M. relapsed after his 8 weeks treatment with Harvoni and then did his 12 weeks treatment with Sofosbuvir + Daclatasvir and completely cleared the Hep C virus. He is SVR 12, which means he is 100% cured. He will not ever relapse.

Question: Why did M relapse after his "official" Hepatitis C treatment with brand Harvoni? (Cost about US$60,000)

Answer: Because 8 weeks treatment was not long enough. For most people 12 weeks treatment is optimum. For people with cirrhosis or who have failed previous treatment, even longer is better.

Question: Why was M cured by a generic Hep C drug combination from India that cost only US$550, almost 100th the price of his original treatment with Harvoni? What is going on here?

Answer: Most people would think that the expensive brand version Harvoni is going to do a better job than a hugely cheaper imported generic drug. WRONG! Sofosbuvir + Daclatasvir is actually the best Hepatitis C treatment that exists. It's better than Mavyret, better than Harvoni, better than Sovaldi and equal to Eplcusa. But Sofosbuvir + Daclatasvir is NEVER prescribed in the USA or any other Western countries. Why? Because two different pharmaceutical companies own the patents. GILEAD owns Sofosbuvir and Bristol Myer Squib owns Daclatasvir.

The simple fact is that Sofosbuvir + Daclatasvir is the best and cheapest Hep C treatment available on the planet.

Question: Why is Sofosbuvir + Daclatasvir better than Harvoni?

Answer: Harvoni was designed specifically for the treatment of Hep C genotype 1. Harvoni is two drugs combined Sofosbuvir 400 mg + Ledipasvir 90 mg. Sofosbuvir is water-soluble but Ledipasvir is quite insoluble and relies on stomach acid to dissolve it and allow it to be absorbed into the blood. This can create problems and may lead to under-dosing. Sofosbuvir 400 mg + Daclatasvir 60 mg treats ALL genotypes of Hep C. Because about 10% of people with Hep C are infected with

more than one genotype of Hep C this gives Sof + Dac a clear treatment advantage. Daclatasvir is water-soluble and easily absorbed into the blood, this reduces the chance of under-dosing.

Why Did M. Relapse After Harvoni Treatment?

But back to M… Why did he relapse?

Simply because his insurance company would only give him 8 weeks treatment rather than the optimum 12 weeks treatment with Harvoni. The reason for this is simple, its all about putting profit before people.

Health insurance companies offer the treatment time of 8 weeks rather than the more successful treatment time of 12 weeks, not because a shorter Hep C treatment time is the best treatment option for the patient with hepatitis C…. it is because it is the cheapest, its best financial option for the health Insurance company

The shorter Hep C treatment duration of 8 weeks is picked by health insurance companies as a balance between the cost and the cure rate. Eight weeks of treatment with Harvoni will give a little above a 90% cure rate. For a health insurance company, 90%+ cure rate for Hepatitis C using Harvoni will cost about $40,000 so it makes more profit than a 98% cure rate for $60,000. In other words, curing only 5% more people will cost the health insurance company almost double the overall cost.

That logic is fine if you are totally focused on maximizing profits. It’s not fine if you happen to be one of the 5% that is not cured at the end of the shorter treatment time.

What To Do to Avoid Relapsing After Hep C Treatment

Over the years of walking through Hepatitis C treatment with hundreds and hundreds of people, I have developed a very simple formula for avoiding relapse.

1. Do the optimum treatment time for your condition. For most people with any Hep C genotype except G3 this means 12 weeks treatment. If you have Hep C G3 then you should do a minimum of 16 weeks treatment. Longer treatment times are also advised if you have liver cirrhosis or have failed previous treatment.
2. Take your medication with a small amount of food.
3. Do not take herbal supplements during treatment.
4. Keep the consumption of caffeine at low levels during treatment. The equivalent of 2 cups of coffee per day should be the maximum.
5. Do not drink energy drinks like Red Bull etc during treatment. These contain Taurine, which causes problems with underdosing.
6. If you are significantly overweight please consult with your doctor about doing a longer treatment. Heavier people have a higher chance of relapsing when doing a standard treatment time.

If you follow these tips your chances of having a relapse will be very, very low.

Click this link for more information on preventing relapse from Hep C treatment

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