How to Fight Hepatitis C 8 Ways

July 8, 2013 By Connie M. Welch

Hepatitis C is not a death sentence and you are NOT helpless. There are 8 ways you can help your body fight Hepatitis C right now to make a difference in your liver health.

When I was diagnosed with Hep C it was overwhelming to learn the damage the virus does to the liver. I researched and talked with my physician and a registered dietitian about how I could help my liver fight HCV. What I discovered help me get back in the driver's seat of my health and empowered me to move forward.

#1 Proactive Healthy Lifestyle

Mindfulness on living a healthy lifestyle helps your liver work better.

Make a Healthy Plan and Work the Plan. Nutrition is one area of disease where a person has control and can actively help in the recovery of liver damage and minimizing further damage.

Help your Liver with Good Nutrition. What you put in your body matters!

An unhealthy diet can lead to liver disease and compromise the function of your liver. The American Liver Foundation states, "eating high fatty foods will put you at risk of being overweight and having non-alcoholic fatty liver disease."

It adds stress to your liver and compromises your immune system. Think in terms of a highly efficient engine and filter. You're liver and immune system is your body's engine and filter. You need to eat the right fuel in order to operate effectively. Help your body help your liver.

General Nutrition for Healthy Living & Liver Disease

- Eat a diet low in saturated and no trans fat.
- Avoid fried foods.
- Eat lean (low fat) protein such as fish, white meat chicken, white meat turkey without the skin.

  Limit red meat due to these are generally higher fat and harder for the body to break down.
- Eat lots of fresh vegetables and fruits, choose organic if possible.
- Eat complex carbohydrates made with whole grains and high fiber.
- Drink 8 to 12 eight ounces of water daily, filtered water if possible. Less chemicals and

additives.

- Stay away from processed foods as much as possible. Fresh or frozen is best!
- Reduce sugar and high sodium foods.
- Choose low fat or non-fat dairy products.
- Avoid sugar substitutes like aspartame (Nutra Sweet, Equal, Splenda, Sweet N Low and others) these are toxic for your liver. Use real sugar, just less of it.

Medical professionals recommend following a generalized healthy diet as stated above. The closer you are to your healthy weight the less stress this puts on your liver. Talk to your doctor or a registered dietitian for dietary guidelines and amounts that are right for you.

#2 Avoid Alcohol

American Liver Foundation states that alcohol can damage or destroy liver cells. Liver damage can lead to the buildup of fat in your liver (fatty liver), inflammation or swelling of your liver (alcoholic hepatitis), and/or scarring of your liver (cirrhosis).

For people with liver disease, even a small amount of alcohol can make the disease worse. A good analogy a doctor told me was to think of hepatitis as a smoldering fire. Alcohol is like gasoline. Don’t throw gasoline on the fire. It’s not worth it.

#3 Exercise

Exercise plays an important role in liver health and boost’s the immune system. Regular exercise will increase energy levels, decease stress on the liver, and in many cases even delay the onset of certain complications associated with liver disease.

Your energy levels can be boosted by even 10 minute walks or other exercise. Start with small blocks of time and continue to add extra minutes when you can. Small changes make big differences!

#4 Manage your Medications

Medications, vitamins, and supplements you take pass through your liver. Your liver is responsible for processing all of these substances. According to the American Liver Foundation, it is important to understand exactly how you should be taking your medications in order to avoid putting undue stress on your liver.

Be discerning when taking vitamins, minerals, and supplements. A good rule of thumb to remember, everything you take has to an effect on your liver and immune system.

Vitamins, minerals and supplements if taken correctly can play a part in good health, but when taken incorrectly can harm your liver. Be especially careful with herbal and alternative liver treatments.

Certain herbs can be dangerous and toxic to your liver and can increase your liver damage. Just because

something says it’s natural doesn’t mean it’s safe. Talk to your doctor before taking anything.

#5 Avoid Environmental Pollutants/Toxins

Toxins can injure your liver cells. Avoid direct contact with chemicals from cleaning products, insecticides, fumes from paint thinners and aerosol sprays.

DO NOT Smoke. And avoid second hand smoke.

#6 A Positive Attitude and Can Do Spirit affects every part of your life and is a vital tool for good health.

A depressive state can chemically affect your health in a negative way and suppress your immune system, leaving you at greater risk for infections and other health issues. See your doctor if you are experiencing depression, or problems with anxiety or insomnia.

A support system is an important tool to help you mentally and emotionally. Good support systems can include: family, friends, church, healthcare team, and support from others who share the same liver disease. A connection with others is good for your health and well being.

#7 See your doctor for regular physical exams and tests.

Write down questions about your liver condition and care. Talk to your doctor about treatment for Hep C. Don’t be afraid to get a second opinion if you don’t feel right about their advice.

#8 Treatment for Hepatitis C

Treatment is available for Hep C, talk to you doctor about which treatment is right for you. See Life Beyond Hepatitis C for Treatment Journey Experiences of other Hep C Patients and articles on New Treatment for Hep C.

Research and Trial studies for brand new treatment are in the works right now and show great promise.

Be Proactive with your health. Take care of your liver. Never take for granted the positive differences you can make.

What ways are you taking care of your liver?

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