Letter to Those Newly Diagnosed with Hepatitis C

December 10, 2013 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

You are not alone. You may feel alone, scared, confused, angry, numb, or shattered. A hepatitis C diagnosis changes everything, at least at first. You may wonder how you got hepatitis C. Perhaps you know how you got it, and if it is because of choices you made earlier in your life, you may be kicking yourself right now. Please don't do that. The past is past, and kicking yourself when you are down is cruel, unnecessary, and it won't help anything.

Perhaps you got hepatitis C because of a blood transfusion or a medical or occupational exposure. You may be feeling like a victim, which you are. It's fine to feel like this for awhile, but too much self-pity isn't helpful. When you are ready, let it go; move from victim to problem-solver.

How you got it doesn't matter, unless you are further exposing yourself to infections. Assuming you aren't still at risk, then the issue is what are you going to do now? How are you going to live your life as a person who has hepatitis C?

Here are some tips:

- **Don't drink alcohol**, not even a little. A little may be safe, but why chance it? If it is hard to stop drinking, get some help.
- **Get the facts.** Hepatitis C is a big subject, and there is lots of information on it. Many websites provide good information, starting here at HEP.
- **Find support.** Hepatitis C is more easily endured when done in the company of fellow patients. There are community-based and virtual hepatitis C groups. HEP offers a forum where you can ask questions, get help, and give help. If you want to participate in more groups, look for them on Facebook, Yahoo, Google, Delphi, etc.
- **Establish good rapport with your medical provider**. Finding a good doctor is easier said than done. Sometimes it takes a few appointments before you know if a medical provider is

right for you.

- **Build health**. Hepatitis C is a liver disease, but the liver connects to your entire body. Strive for daily exercise, healthy nutrition, good nightly sleep, etc.
- **Care for your liver.** Everything goes through your liver whether you eat it, drink it, breathe it, or apply it to your skin. Before you eat something, ask yourself, “Is this good for my liver.” Question every drug, supplement, food, etc.
- **Protect yourself and others.** Learn how hepatitis C is and isn’t transmitted and live accordingly.
- **Let go of fear.** Fear is normal, especially in the beginning. However, after awhile, fear becomes a useless drain on you, your body, your relationships, and your ability to live a better life. However, fear doesn’t just vanish because we want it to. It takes practice. Hepatitis C is much like going on a roller coaster. The first few drops stir up major reactions, but after awhile, the roller coaster is easier to take. Then you go on a new, bigger roller coaster and the fear comes back. However, you can master that roller coaster in time.
- **Laugh.** Humor has many health benefits, and helps the immune system. Plus, it feels good. I started the Hepatitis Comics because I wasn’t afraid to laugh at or with hepatitis C.
- **Embrace life.** It is interesting to me how some people are going along in their lives, find out they have hepatitis C from a routine test, and then feel their lives have stopped. If you lived a full life before hepatitis C, you can live one now. In fact, if ever you had an excuse to practice full-frontal living, it is now. I know people who are in end-stage liver disease who can run rings around many.
- **Never give up hope.** The majority of people who have hepatitis C can be cured. Even if the current treatments seem like more than you want to go through right now, easier ones are in the pipeline.
- When you are ready, **help others.** You know what it is like to have hepatitis C, to be afraid, and to not know where to turn. In time, you will be the one others can turn to, if you are willing to extend the hand of help.
- Wear your seat belt. You don’t want to die in a car crash before you are cured of hepatitis C!

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.