How to Prepare for Hep C Triple Therapy, Part 1

May 24, 2013 By Connie M. Welch

Do you need information on how to prepare for Hep C Triple Therapy? The Preparation phase is a very important part of treatment. Here are some helpful tips to set you up for success.

Triple Therapy includes using one of the new protease inhibitors, Incivek (telaprevir) or Victrelis (boceprevir) in combination with Peg Interferon and Ribavirin. Depending on which medication you use, along with Peg Interferon and Ribavirin, there are similar yet different side effects.

There are four areas in which to prepare:

1. Physically, to get informed on side effects and how to be ready to address them.
2. Emotionally & Mentally, to get connected with help and support you will need. Practical tips to help you mentally.
3. Spiritually, to know that God is there with real help you can rely on.
4. Financial Help with Meds / Employer/Work information on Medical Leave Act & how to handle work issues.

Physically, get familiar with the common treatment side effects you need to know about. See links: Common Treatment Side Effects and Incivek & Victrelis; What's the Difference?

How to Store Medications:

- Peg Interferon (injection pen) is required to be stored in the refrigerator. If you travel, it will have to be stored in a water proof container in a cooler.
- Ribavirin is pills. Store in room temperature.
- Incivek and Victrelis are pills. Store in room temperature.

How to Take Medications:

Make sure you receive training from your doctor or nurse on how to properly administer your meds. In case of questions you can also call Vertex and Merck 24 hour Nurse Support helpline.

Timing on taking meds is very important. Set up a schedule that works for you and don't miss a dose. You need to get ahead of the virus and your meds help you do that when taken on time.

- Peg Interferon is pen style injection you will give yourself once a week. Your nurse will train you on how to mix and give yourself the injection. You can do it!
- Ribavirin are pills taken 2 times a day. Try not to take last dose any later than 4:00pm. My doctor & nurse told me this interferes with sleep. Ribavirin does not have to be taken with food, but it does help. My nurse told me Ribavirin can be a little hard on your stomach if empty. You can also take it the same time you take Incivek or Victrelis.
- Incivek and Victrelis are pills taken 3 times per day with requirement to take 7 to 9 hours apart. DO NOT MISS A DOSE. In case you do, contact your doctor's office for instructions. Do not double up on this medication.

Important information for taking Incivek (telaprevir).

Fat Intake is a requirement with Incivek: A Minimum of 20 grams of fat per dose. Incivek is two pills taken 3 times a day, 7 to 9 hours apart. ***Tip: If you increase your fat intake to more than the required amount, some patients have reported relief from burning/itching side effect.

Note: The fat works as a binder to the protease inhibitor and transports it directly to the virus cells, and destroys it. (Think of it as a Trojan Horse, working for YOU).

Stay tuned for Part 2, How to Prepare for Hep C Triple Therapy.

Are you preparing for triple therapy? Do you have any questions?

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