



After Treatment for Hepatitis C, Now What?

What steps do you take to regain your health, your energy, and heal your liver?

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After you have completed treatment for Hepatitis C now what? What steps do you take to regain your health, your energy, and heal your liver?

Once you've completed treatment you have to wait for the final blood test and report to see if you're clear of the Hepatitis C virus. The waiting period can be stressful but making a good plan for your recovery is very important in helping you with the healing process. Concentrate on your recovery plan.

- Follow up with your doctor for blood tests and exams in the coming months to a year. It is general practice for physicians to test patients 12 weeks from when Hep C treatment has been completed. Many physicians also do blood work at 24 weeks post-treatment. Once you receive SVR 12 (sustained virological response) meaning non-detection of the hepatitis C virus is found in the blood 12 weeks after completing treatment, you are considered cured of Hepatitis C.
- Many specialists recommend following up annually with an ultrasound on your liver due to Hep C patients retain a risk factor of developing cyst or tumors with possible liver cancer.
- Avoid Alcohol. Depending on the level of liver damage from Hepatitis C, Fatty Liver or Cirrhosis, your liver needs time to heal. Make sure to talk to your doctor about what level of liver damage you have and what steps you need to take with diet, exercise, or medications to best take care of your liver.
- Eat a healthy clean diet of whole fresh foods. Avoid processed foods as much as possible. Organic is best to ensure your food is clear of pesticides and harmful chemicals. Lean quality proteins, fish, and poultry are good meat choices. Limit how often you eat red meat due to red

meat takes longer to digest and can be harder on your liver. Avoid high salty foods if you have cirrhosis due to problems with accumulating fluid. Fresh vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds are excellent choices. Be sure to talk to your doctor if you have cirrhosis, fatty liver or diabetes to know what diet is best suited for your condition.

- Drink lots of pure water during your recovery period. 64 ounces of pure water is recommended per day. You can infuse your water with citrus or fruits like strawberries, blueberries, peaches, or cucumber and mint for a variety. You can drink coffee, or tea, just don't count these as your water intake.
- Moderate exercise is a great way to help rebuild your strength, and stamina along with helping you regain muscle tone. Walking is a great way to get in some cardio exercises. Stretching exercises and resistance bands are great ways to help increase muscle tone.
- Avoid exposure to direct sun and heat during recovery. High humidity and high temperatures, along with too much direct sun can be energy zappers during recovery. You may also experience photosensitivity if you have just completed treatment.
- Listen to your body. If you experience fatigue and energy drops, take a rest break. If possible lie down and take a short nap. If you can't take a nap, sit down with your feet up, take some deep breaths, drink some water (to keep you hydrated) and have a light healthy snack for energy. Resting is part of the healing process.
- Everyone's recovery is different. Remember, fighting Hep C and treatment didn't happen overnight and neither is recovery. Fatigue is the most common of all treatment side effects and can linger into recovery. Each week you are making progress in recovery from treatment. Give yourself a break. Don't get caught up in faulty thinking that you should regain all your energy and stamina by a certain timeframe. Healing takes time. Be good to yourself.

These basic steps are part of a good post-hepatitis C treatment recovery program that will help you in your healing process.

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