



# HEPATITIS C AND PREGNANCY

Hepatitis C is the inflammation of the liver caused by the hepatitis C virus. This condition must be treated with medicines to avoid serious health problems, such as permanent liver damage, cirrhosis, liver cancer, or death.

## TRANSMISSION

Hepatitis C is transmitted through contact with blood from an infected person. The highest risk practices are:

- Sharing drug injection equipment
- During pregnancy or at childbirth, infected mother can pass the virus to their children
- Tattoos or body piercing done at unregulated places
- Sharing personal items that contain blood residue (lancets for measuring glucose, razors, nail clippers or toothbrushes)
- Blood transfusions and organ transplants performed before 1992
- Exposure during medical procedures
- Sex with an infected person

## SYMPTOMS

- |                               |                  |                           |
|-------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| ■ Dark yellow urine           | ■ Fatigue        | ■ Yellowish skin and eyes |
| ■ Loss of appetite            | ■ Fever          | ■ Nausea and vomiting     |
| ■ Grey or clay-colored stools | ■ Abdominal pain | ■ Joint pain              |

## TREATMENT

There are antiviral medicines that cure most people with hepatitis C. Although the treatment is not recommended during pregnancy, you may receive it:

After childbirth

At the end of the breastfeeding period

Before planning a pregnancy

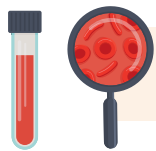


If you have hepatitis C and are pregnant, your doctor will continue to monitor the infection and your liver function. You can breastfeed without the risk of transmitting the virus, unless the nipples are cracked, injured, or bleeding. It is not recommended that you breastfeed if you have HIV.

## PREVENTION

There is no vaccine to prevent hepatitis C. You can prevent it by avoiding contact with blood contaminated by the virus.

- Avoid sharing or reusing needles, syringes or any other equipment used to inject drugs or medicines.
- Do not get tattoos or body piercings at unregulated places.
- Do not use personal items that contain traces of other people's blood (glucose lancets, razors, nail clippers, or toothbrushes).
- Use a latex condom when having sex.



**GET TESTED FOR HEPATITIS C WITH EACH PREGNANCY, AS PART OF YOUR PRENATAL CARE.**

A blood test will indicate if you are infected or if you had it in the past. Many people are unaware that they have hepatitis C since they may not have symptoms or feel sick.

For guidance and assistance, call the  
**PSM Beneficiary Service**  
**1-866-600-4753 / 1-844-726-3345 TTY** (hearing impaired)  
This call is free of charge.

[www.MenonitaVital.com](http://www.MenonitaVital.com)

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As requested, this document may be available in alternate formats such as large print, audio 1-866-600-4753 y 1-844-726-3345 TTY (hearing impaired). If you speak English, language assistance services are available free of charge. Call 1-866-600-4753 and 1-844-726-3345 TTY (hearing impaired).

## References:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/knowmorehepatitis/hcp/Test-For-HepC-During-Pregnancy.htm>
- <https://www.hcvguidelines.org/unique-populations/pregnancy>
- <https://www.acog.org/womens-health/faqs/hepatitis-b-and-hepatitis-c-in-pregnancy>