

HEPATITIS

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver, usually caused by a virus.
Other types of hepatitis may be caused by toxic drugs and excessive alcohol intake.

Types

Hepatitis A

Most commonly transmitted in drinking water or food contaminated with the stool containing the virus.

Hepatitis B

Spread through contact with the blood and body fluids of an infected person.

Hepatitis C

Spread by contact with an infected person's blood.

Hepatitis D

Transmitted through contact with infectious blood and may occur with Hepatitis B.

Hepatitis E

Transmitted mainly through contaminated drinking water.

Signs and Symptoms

Early Stage

- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Mild fever
- Muscle or joint aches
- Nausea
- Slight abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Weight loss

Late stage

- Circulation problems
- Dark urine
- Dizziness
- Drowsiness
- Enlarged spleen
- Headache
- Hives
- Itchy skin
- Light-colored feces (may contain pus)
- Yellow skin, whites of eyes, tongue (jaundice)

Treatment

- Treatment depends on the type of hepatitis.
- Antiviral drugs
- Liver transplant

QUESTIONS

- How can a person avoid getting hepatitis?
- What are the five types of hepatitis caused by a virus? How are they transmitted?
- As a healthcare practitioner caring for a patient with Hepatitis B, what should you do to prevent yourself from getting infected?