



*"Health is worth more than learning."* - Thomas Jefferson

**More must be done to stop this silent killer. It is closer than you think. Hepatitis affects everyone, everywhere. Know it. Confront it.**

**World Hepatitis Awareness Month is May**

## Hepatitis

Hepatitis is swelling and inflammation of the liver.

### Causes:

Hepatitis can be caused by:

- ✚ Immune cells in the body attacking the liver.
- ✚ Infections from viruses (such as hepatitis A, hepatitis B or hepatitis C), bacteria, or parasites.
- ✚ Liver damage from alcohol or poison.
- ✚ Medicines, such as an overdose of acetaminophen.
- ✚ Wilson's disease, a disorder in which the body retains too much copper.

### Symptoms:

The symptoms of hepatitis include:

- ✚ Pain or bloating in the belly area.
- ✚ Dark urine and pale or clay-colored stools.
- ✚ Fatigue.
- ✚ Itching.
- ✚ Jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes).
- ✚ Weight loss.
- ✚ Fever.
- ✚ Nausea, vomiting, and lack of appetite.
- ✚ Abdominal pain (on the upper right side).

### When to Contact a Medical Professional?

#### Seek care immediately if you:

- ✚ Have symptoms from taking too much acetaminophen or other medicines -- you may need to have your stomach pumped.
- ✚ Vomit blood.

-  Have bloody or tarry stools.
-  Are confused or delirious.

### Call your doctor if:

-  You have any symptoms of hepatitis or believe that you have been exposed to hepatitis A, B, or C.
-  You cannot keep food down due to excessive vomiting. You may need to receive nutrition through a vein (intravenously).
-  You feel sick and have travelled lately to Asia, Africa, South America, or Central America.

### Prevention:

Vaccines are available to prevent hepatitis A and B.

Talk to your doctor about receiving a vaccine to prevent hepatitis A and hepatitis B.

### Steps for preventing the spread of hepatitis B and C from one person to another include:

-  Avoid sharing personal items, such as razors or toothbrushes.
-  Do not share drug needles or other drug equipment (such as straws for snorting drugs).
-  Clean blood spills with a mixture of 1 part household bleach to 9 parts water.
-  Do not get tattoos or body piercings with instruments that have not been cleaned properly.

### To reduce your risk of spreading or catching hepatitis A:

-  Always wash your hands well after using the restroom, and when you come in contact with an infected person's blood, stools, or other body fluid.
-  Avoid unclean food and water.

### Be Safe:

In addition to getting vaccinations against hepatitis A and B, here is how to protect yourself against hepatitis virus infection:

-  Don't have unprotected sex.
-  Avoid intravenous drug use and sharing of drug paraphernalia.
-  Wash your hands before handling food and after using the bathroom.
-  Be sure tattoo or piercing shops sterilize needles and other equipment properly.
-  Don't share toothbrushes or razors. Hepatitis can be transmitted through sores or cuts.
-  Avoid eating raw shellfish (such as clams or oysters). You could put yourself at risk for hepatitis A if the shellfish was harvested from contaminated water.

### Reference Links:

-  <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hepatitis>
-  [www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HepPromoResources.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HepPromoResources.htm)
-  [www.whathealth.com/awareness/event/hepatitisawarenessmonth.html](http://www.whathealth.com/awareness/event/hepatitisawarenessmonth.html)
-  [www.liverfoundation.org](http://www.liverfoundation.org) › Divisions
-  [www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HepAwarenessMonth.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HepAwarenessMonth.htm)

**For any enquiry or assistance please contact:** [wellness@medicaretpa.co.in](mailto:wellness@medicaretpa.co.in)

**Disclaimer:** No information contained here should be relied on in making health decisions. Always check with your doctor or other health care provider.