





MORE SUPPLEMENT TIPS

We need more clinical trials to see if dietary supplements and other therapies are safe or valuable for people with HCV and HIV. These guidelines may help people to think before taking complementary treatments:

-  Always check with a doctor.
-  See a licensed and knowledgeable practitioner.
-  Beware of scams especially promises of a cure.
-  Consider the consequences of all therapies. This includes the interaction of complementary treatments, medications and recreational drugs.

VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This information is for educational purposes only. It should not be considered medical, fitness, dietetic, or other professional advice. **Talk with a doctor about all supplementation programs.** This document is based on research information in the scientific literature as of January 2005.

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DEALING WITH HEPATITIS C (HCV)



The human liver has an important role in the body. It breaks down and detoxifies what you eat, breathe and absorb through your skin. Diseases such as Hepatitis (HEP-ah-TY-tis) C can cause stress and liver damage. The liver may not work as well. It can become very unhealthy. This fact sheet is for people with HCV who do NOT have liver cirrhosis.

People with Hepatitis C (HCV) and HIV must pay special attention to what they eat. The information in this fact sheet can help people to improve their nutritional status. Health care providers such as doctors and nutritionists can help people learn about nutrition and nutritional status.

NUTRITION AND LIVER DISEASE

A balanced diet is important. It includes complex carbohydrate foods such as whole grains, beans, vegetables and fruits. Good nutrition is a vital part of treatment. Eating enough calories and protein is important. It helps to heal the liver and keep a healthy body weight. Too little protein slows down liver healing. Eating too much protein causes the body to make more of the chemical ammonia. This can be very harmful. The tips here can help to improve nutritional status.

- ◆ Limit fat to 30% of total daily calories.
- ◆ Eat one gram of protein for every two pounds of body weight ($\frac{1}{2}$ gram/pound).
- ◆ Eat 15-18 calories per pound of target body weight.
- ◆ Limit foods high in calories from refined sugars, such as liquid dietary supplements.

See a doctor and a nutritionist. They can help to design a meal plan. Individual meal plans can help to make sure calorie and protein needs are met.

ALCOHOL

Avoid alcohol. Doctors may have a hard time trying to see if liver damage is due to drinking alcohol or actual damage to the liver. Alcohol hurts the immune system. Drinking alcohol does not give the liver or immune system a chance to heal and rebuild. Avoid beer, wine, cocktails, champagne, and alcohol in any other form.

IMPORTANT TIPS

People who do drink alcohol should not take Tylenol or acetaminophen. This will help to avoid more liver damage.



All recreational drugs stress the liver and the immune system. Avoid recreational drugs to help the liver and immune system heal and rebuild.

VITAMINS, MINERALS AND DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS

Nutrients should come mainly from food, not vitamins. "Mega" vitamin supplements can be harmful, especially if they have vitamins A and D in them. Vitamins with high levels of iron can be harmful too. Avoid taking any dietary supplements, herbs, or medicines without a doctor's approval.

We do not know if complementary therapies really help people with HCV and HIV. There are many interactions between dietary supplements and other substances. We need more research to learn about side effects and interactions with other substances. See a doctor, licensed practitioner or nutritionist before taking any dietary supplement. These health care professionals can help to assess overall health and decide what therapies may help.

ASK A DOCTOR ABOUT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND EXERCISE PROGRAMS.