

MORE SUPPLEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Large-scale, randomized, controlled trials are needed to determine the therapeutic value and medical safety of herbs, dietary supplements and other therapies in people who have both HIV and HCV. If you are considering a complementary treatment follow these guidelines:

- ⇒ Always check with your doctor.
- ⇒ See a licensed and knowledgeable practitioner.
- ⇒ Beware of scams especially promises of a cure.
- ⇒ Consider the consequences of all therapies including the interaction of complementary treatments and medications.

VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This information is for educational purposes only. Nothing in this document shall be construed as medical, fitness, dietetic, or other professional advice. **Talk with your doctor about all supplementation programs.** This document is based on information in the scientific literature as of August 2001.

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DEALING WITH HEPATITIS C (HCV)



Your liver plays an important role in your body. Its primary functions are to refine and detoxify everything you eat, breathe and absorb through your skin. It can be considered your body's internal chemical plant. When invaded with a disease, like Hepatitis (HEP-ah-TY-tis) C, your liver is subjected to stress and liver damage that may eventually cause your liver to become very unhealthy and unable to perform its functions that keep you alive and well. Infection with both Hepatitis C and HIV require that the infected individuals pay special attention to their eating habits.

This pamphlet will help you to lessen the risk of developing a poor nutritional status. It offers general nutrition information for people with hepatitis C who do NOT have cirrhosis. All people with HCV should consult with their doctor and nutrition professional about proper nutrition and health planning.

NUTRITION AND LIVER DISEASE

A balanced diet is important and includes complex carbohydrate foods such as whole grains, legumes, vegetables and fruits. Nutrition is an essential part of treatment and a goal is to provide sufficient calories and protein for healing, liver regeneration and for the maintenance of a healthy body weight, without adding extra stress to the liver. Too little protein can reduce liver healing while too much protein is not recommended since it will result in more ammonia in the blood. No more than 30% of a person's total calories should come from fat because of the danger to the cardiovascular system.

- ◇ Eat one gram of protein for every two pounds you weigh ($\frac{1}{2}$ gram/pound)
- ◇ Eat 15-18 calories per pound of ideal body weight
- ◇ Limit foods that are high in calories from refined sugars, such as high calorie supplements.

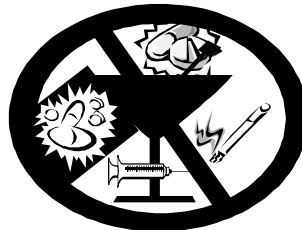
See a doctor and nutrition professional such as a Registered Dietitian (RD) or a Dietetic Technician, Registered (DTR) for nutrition assessment and individual dietary guidelines because they can help you to accurately calculate calorie and protein needs based on your disease status.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Avoid alcohol. You will need to stop drinking alcohol completely to give your liver and immune system a chance to heal and re-build. This means avoiding beer, wine, cocktails, champagne, and alcohol in any other form. If you continue to drink, your doctor may have difficulty determining if changes may be due to the alcohol intake or actual damage to the liver.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Alcohol has a negative impact on the immune system. If you are drinking alcohol, **avoid** taking Tylenol or acetaminophen, which will further damage the liver.



Avoid all recreational drugs. They will add stress to both the liver and the immune system.

VITAMINS, MINERALS AND DIETARY SUPPLEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Remember that your nutrition balance should come primarily from what you eat. Unless prescribed by your doctor, eliminate vitamins that contain high levels of iron and do not take vitamins that are "mega" in strength. Mega-vitamin supplements, particularly if they contain vitamins A and D may be harmful. Avoid taking any dietary supplements, herbs, or medicines without your doctor's approval and consult a RD or DTR.

We still do not know whether complementary therapies really help people with HCV and HIV. Further research is needed to investigate possible side effects, interactions with other substances and drug interactions. Because of the many interactions between dietary supplements, medications and foods always see a well-informed doctor, licensed practitioner or RD before taking any supplement.

WITH YOUR DOCTOR'S APPROVAL, INCREASE YOUR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OR START AN EXERCISE PROGRAM.