Hepatitis C (HCV)

Hepatitis C is a virus that attacks the liver. Most people who have the virus don't feel sick. Some people feel tired or have low energy. If the liver gets scarred from HCV, liver failure and liver cancer can happen. You can get HCV when you have contact with infected blood. It is prevented by not sharing needles or works for drugs, razors, nail clippers or toothbrushes. Needles and ink for tattooing should be new or sterilized.

Hepatitis C is Curable!

- Treatment is now pills only, taken for 8-12 weeks depending on the type of hepatitis C and how much scarring is in the liver
- 3 common medications used are Mavyret ^{TM}, Epclusa ®, and Harvoni ®. The side effects are very mild
- If you have been told you have advanced scarring or cirrhosis you may want to take treatment now rather than waiting

Research Corner

What We Have Learned

- The greatest risk of end stage liver disease, liver cancer and liver related death in Alaska Native persons with HCV is in those who have advanced fibrosis (scarring) in the liver
- The cure rate for Alaska Native and American Indian persons with the old medicines (interferon and ribavirin) was much lower (49%) and many persons stopped treatment due to unpleasant side effects
- The cure rate with new medicines is 96% and the side effects are very mild.
- Persons with Hepatitis C who have genotype 3, diabetes or are older in age have a higher risk of developing cirrhosis and liver cancer
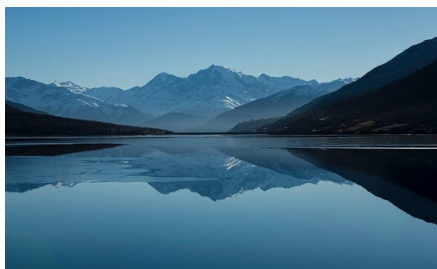
For more information contact us at:
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1-800-655-4837

Hepatitis C (HCV)

Summer, 2018

"Hepatitis" *Aggravated Organizms*
by Alaska Native artists, Drew Michael and Elizabeth Ellis

ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM
LIVER DISEASE & HEPATITIS PROGRAM

FibroScan Update

FibroScan is a painless, quick and noninvasive test that measures liver stiffness. It works by sending a small wave of energy, felt as a slight vibration on the skin.

A FibroScan can show how much scarring (fibrosis) is in the liver.

FibroScan can also measure the amount of fat (steatosis) in the liver. This is called a CAP measurement.

FibroScan has been available at ANMC since 2015. A portable FibroScan is now available during liver field clinics held in hubs across the State.

Please remember to fast for 3 hours before your FibroScan.

If you have advanced fibrosis or cirrhosis, be sure to:

Have a liver ultrasound and an AFP (alpha feto-protein) blood test done every 6 months.

These tests can help to identify liver cancer early when it is treatable.

Focus on Health
What is Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD)?

Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD) is the build up of fat in the liver in a person who does not drink alcohol or drinks very little.

You can have NAFLD along with HCV.

NAFLD is diagnosed from abnormal liver function tests and a liver ultrasound showing fat (steatosis). Some people with NAFLD can develop NASH (nonalcoholic steatohepatitis). NASH develops when the fat causes inflammation and damage to liver cells. NASH can only be diagnosed by liver biopsy.

Most people with NAFLD have no symptoms.

Who is at risk?

1. **People who are overweight or obese**

2. **People with diabetes, high cholesterol, or high triglycerides**

3. **People with poor eating habits**

Treatment is weight loss through healthy diet and aerobic exercise.

Adequate rest and traditional, cultural activities are also good for a healthy liver!

Mediterranean Diet Tips

- At every meal:
  - eat 2 or more servings of vegetables
  - eat 1-2 servings of fruit & whole grains
  - use olive oil

- Every day:
  - eat 2 servings of low fat dairy
  - eat 1-2 servings of olives, nuts or seeds
  - use herbs, spices, garlic & onion for seasoning and limit salt

- Every week
  - eat 2 or more servings of fish & legumes (such as chickpeas, lentils and beans)
  - eat 2 servings of white meat (like chicken)
  - eat 2-4 servings of eggs, less than 2 servings of red meat
  - eat less than 1 serving of processed meat
  - eat 3 or fewer servings of potato.
  - limit sweets/desserts to 2 or fewer servings weekly