



ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM

Liver Disease & Hepatitis Program
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<http://www.anthc.org/hep>

We are glad to hear you are interested in treatment for HCV! Here are some things to think about (and do) before you make your decision about treatment:

Why be treated? Current medications have high cure rates and less side effects. Getting rid of HCV reduces your risk of developing complications and improves your quality of life.

What FDA-approved treatments are available?

Commonly used treatments for **Hepatitis C** are:

- Mavyret™ (glecaprevir/pibrentasvir), 3 tablets taken once daily with food for 8 weeks. The most common side effects are headache (18%) and fatigue (15%). In clinical studies, the treatment response rate to Mavyret™ was 95% -100%.
- Epclusa® (sofosbuvir/velpatasvir), 1 tablet taken once a day for 12 weeks. The most common side effects are headache (22%) and feeling tired (15%). In clinical studies, the treatment response rate to Epclusa® was 95% -100%.

Another option if you have **Genotype 1, 4, 5 or 6 Hepatitis C** is:

- Harvoni® (ledipasvir/sofosbuvir), 1 tablet taken once a day for 8-12 weeks. The most common side effects are feeling tired (16%) and headache (14%). In clinical studies, treatment response rates to Harvoni® were 94-100%.

There are no data on the new HCV drugs in pregnant women or nursing mothers. Therefore, if you are a woman capable of getting pregnant you will be asked to use birth control during treatment. Please note that estrogen containing birth control (such as birth control pills) should not be taken with Mavyret. Treatment is recommended as soon as you are no longer pregnant or breastfeeding.

Rarely, treatment will require ribavirin which is 5-6 more tablets per day divided between morning and evening with food. The major side effects are feeling tired, nausea, itching and skin rash, trouble sleeping, irritability and weakness. A common side effect of ribavirin is anemia. **PLEASE NOTE: Ribavirin cannot be given to a pregnant or breastfeeding female or to a female who plans to become pregnant or a male who plans to father a child during or for 6 months after treatment because it can cause birth defects.**

Are you ready for treatment?

To ensure your success in completing HCV treatment, please consider the following:

- Drinking alcohol or misusing opioids or other drugs can hurt the liver. If you have recent drug/alcohol abuse, it is recommended that you seek counseling and/or connect with a drug treatment program (such as 4A's, Interior AIDS Association, iknowmine.org) to get free sterile needles, syringes and other supplies.
- Have you discussed HCV treatment with your primary care provider?
- It's helpful to have a relative/close friend to support you during treatment.
- In-person/phone visits or blood tests may be needed during treatment. Are you able to make and keep appointments?
- Can you return for an appointment 12 weeks after completing medication to be tested for cure?

Additional Requirements If Checked:

If you have cirrhosis, you may need an:

____ EGD (A tube put into the esophagus and stomach to look for swollen veins that can bleed).

____ Ultrasound of the liver (done in the past 6 months). This non-invasive test checks your liver for cancer.

If you are coming to Anchorage and a FibroScan has been recommended, call the Liver Clinic ahead of your visit to schedule an appointment. FibroScan is a test using ultrasound waves to check liver stiffness or scarring/fibrosis and fat in your liver. FibroScan testing is done in the Internal Medicine Clinic. Do not eat or drink for 3 hours before the test. Call us at 907-729-1560 or 1-800-655-4837.