

If you have a client with hepatitis C, don't wait to talk about a cure.

Did you know there is a cure for hepatitis C?

Talk to the client in a quiet area.

Remember they may have felt stigma due to hepatitis C. You don't have to know everything about the cure. You just need to assist that person to reach the right service.

Just know that any time you want to talk about getting cured, I'm happy to help. I'll put you in touch with the right people when you are ready.

Clients can get a script for the hepatitis C medicine from:

- ✓ a GP
- ✓ some sexual health clinics
- ✓ Aboriginal Medical Clinics
- ✓ Alcohol and Drug services
- ✓ liver clinics.

recovery in
8-12
weeks

Most people get better in 8 to 12 weeks with as few as one pill a day.

Wait times and treatment times may vary.

Clients should talk about medicine options with their doctor.

Don't wait to talk about the cure.

Liver cancer is on the rise.

over
400
deaths /year

More than 400 people die from hepatitis C every year.

1
conversation
could save
a life

One simple conversation could save a person's life.

YOU could be that difference.

If you want to know more, or to find the closest referral for your client, call the [National Hepatitis Infoline: 1800 437 222 \(1800 HEPABC\)](tel:1800437222). There's nothing to lose except hepatitis C.

There are links between mental health and hepatitis C.

Make hepatitis C treatment part of your client's mental health care plan.

Quick facts about hepatitis C and mental health.

- ✔ Hepatitis C is more common for people who use inpatient mental health services than the general public.
- ✔ Poor liver health can cause joint pain and nausea (an upset stomach). It can change a person's moods, and make them feel more confused, irritable or tired.
- ✔ There are strong links between stress and liver damage.
- ✔ Hepatitis C can lower quality of life. This can happen no matter how long someone has had the disease or if they have used drugs in the past. A cure lowers the chance of death due to liver cancer and can improve quality of life.
- ✔ Poor liver health can cause problems with hormones. This can affect overall health and wellbeing.
- ✔ Hepatitis C is also strongly linked to other health issues, like insulin resistance, renal issues, and heart disease.
- ✔ A person with hepatitis C may have no signs, or they may be hard to recognise, such as feeling tired or depressed.
- ✔ We can reduce a large health cost by treating hepatitis C.
- ✔ Hepatitis C is a very stigmatised condition. Clients' mental health often improves once they clear hepatitis C. Being cured can be a powerful tool in recovery, self-identity and reducing stigma and anxiety within relationships.
- ✔ It is crucial that clients take the tablets daily. Otherwise they do not work as well, and the tablets are less likely to clear the virus. Mental health workers are key in helping clients get better.

Mythbusters: don't let the myths slow you down. Make the referral.

- ✔ Are the medicines free for anyone with a Medicare card? (apart from the standard subsidised prescription fee for each script). Yes.
- ✔ Can clients get treatment again? Yes.
- ✔ Can clients get the medicine while drinking alcohol or using other drugs? Yes.
- ✘ Are the hepatitis C medicines linked to neuro psychiatric adverse side effects? No.
- ✘ Is hepatitis C medicine contraindicated for people with mental health issues? No.



MORE INFORMATION

If you want to know more, or to find the closest referral for your client call the National Hepatitis Infoline: 1800 437 222 (1800 HEPABC) There's nothing to lose except hepatitis C. www.hepatitisaustralia.com

References

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- [Worried About Your Liver? Here's What to Look For](#), Healthline
- [A literature review for the mechanisms of stress-induced liver injury](#), Jin-Yong Joung, Jung-Hyo Cho, Yun-Hee Kim, Seung-Hoon Choi, Chang-Gue Son. DOI: [10.1002/brb3.1235](https://doi.org/10.1002/brb3.1235)
- [Health-Related Quality of Life in Chronic Hepatitis C](#), Helder Cardoso* and Marco Silva, DOI: [10.1159/000453319](https://doi.org/10.1159/000453319)
- [Australian Recommendations for the Management of Hepatitis C Virus Infection: A consensus statement \(June 2020\)](#), GESA
- [HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmissible infections in Australia Annual surveillance report 2021: Hepatitis C](#), Kirby Institute

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