

Hepatitis: After Pregnancy

What you can do to decrease risks for you and a future pregnancy



Things to do **EVERY DAY** for healthy women and babies:

Exercise – 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week

Vitamin – 400 micrograms (mcg) of Folic Acid per day

Educate yourself about medicines and chemicals that can cause birth defects

Reproductive life planning – set your personal goals for birth control and future children

Yearly doctor visits to discuss physical and mental wellness

Diet – Vegetables, fruits, and whole grains daily

Avoid tobacco, drugs, and alcohol

Your partner, friends, and family should be sources of support

Content from everywomanocalifornia.org with permission from the Preconception Health Council of California.



About hepatitis

Hepatitis is an infection of the liver, usually caused by a virus. The most common viruses causing hepatitis are hepatitis A, B and C. Viral hepatitis can be a long-term condition causing serious problems, such as liver failure or liver cancer. Most people infected with hepatitis B or C become carriers of the disease, meaning the virus always remains in the body and can be passed to others.

How do people get hepatitis?

Hepatitis is spread by contact with bodily fluids and blood during activities like unprotected sex, sharing needles, and reusing tattoo and piercing tools. Mothers can pass hepatitis to their babies during birth.

What are the symptoms?

Patients who have symptoms may feel tired, have abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting, or have jaundice (yellowish skin). Most people with hepatitis do not have symptoms, and you can't tell by looking at someone if they have hepatitis.

How can you stay healthy?

- If your health care provider has given you any medication for hepatitis, take it exactly as prescribed.
- Do not drink alcohol, because it can damage the liver.
- Speak to your provider before taking new medications or supplements.
- Get vaccinated for other types of hepatitis and other preventable diseases.
- Use an effective form of birth control to prevent unplanned pregnancy. Make sure your disease is under control before getting pregnant again – this will decrease the risk of giving hepatitis to your next baby.

How can you keep your baby and family healthy?

- Make sure your baby's pediatrician knows you have hepatitis. Because mothers can give hepatitis during pregnancy or birth, your baby may need special care.
- Breastfeeding is safe with hepatitis.
- Make sure everyone who lives in your house has been vaccinated for hepatitis B. Don't share personal items, such as razors or toothbrushes. Practice safe sex using condoms and don't share needles.

Remember your ABCs:

folic  cid  reastfeeding  ontraception

For more information, go to:

American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists: acog.org/publications/faq/faq093.cfm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: cdc.gov/hepatitis/Publicinfo.htm#whatIsHep

Every Woman California: everywomanocalifornia.org/content.cfm?categoriesID=4

March of Dimes: marchofdimes.com/complications_liver.html