

COMPARING HEPATITIS A, B, C

	Hepatitis A (hep A, HAV)	Hepatitis B (hep B, HBV)	Hepatitis C (hep C, HCV)
What is it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A virus that causes inflammation of the liver Only acute infection (short term) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A virus that causes inflammation of the liver Chronic in around 5% of adults Chronic for around 90-95% of newborns who contract hep B at birth Can lead to cirrhosis and liver cancer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A virus that causes inflammation of the liver Chronic for around 75% of people Can lead to cirrhosis and liver cancer
How long is the incubation period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 15 and 50 days Average 30 days <p><i>Incubation period: time of exposure until onset of sickness</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 30 and 180 days Average 30 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 6 to 10 weeks
How long is the window period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard to define due to length of infection <p><i>Window period: time of exposure until antibodies can be detected</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 3 and 6 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 3 and 6 months
How is it transmitted?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By faecal-oral contact (poo-to-mouth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blood-to-blood contact Sexual contact From a hep B positive mother to newborn baby (vertical transmission) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blood-to-blood contact From a hep C positive mother to newborn baby (vertical transmission - rare)
What behaviours place people at risk?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eating food prepared by a person with hep A who hasn't washed their hands Intimate sexual contact with a person with hep A (e.g. oral/anal sex) Travel to developing countries Drinking water infected with hep A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual contact with a person who has hep B Use of unsterile equipment when injecting drugs Use of unsterile tattooing or body piercing equipment People born in countries with high hep B prevalence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of unsterile equipment when injecting drugs Use of unsterile tattooing or body piercing equipment Receiving blood products (prior to 1990 in Australia) People born in countries with high prevalence
Is there a vaccine?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes - 2 injections over 6 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes - 3 injections over 6 months for adults (4 injections for children - part of childhood vaccinations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No available vaccine

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What are the symptoms in acute (short term) infection?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults may have light coloured faeces, dark urine, fatigue, jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin), nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain or discomfort and loss of appetite Some people, especially young children, may have no symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults may have light coloured faeces, dark urine, fatigue, jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin), nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain or discomfort and loss of appetite Most people have some symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults may have light coloured faeces, dark urine, fatigue, jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin), nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain or discomfort and loss of appetite People may have a range of symptoms, these are usually mild
What are the symptoms in chronic infection?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NONE Hep A is only an acute (short term) infection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fatigue, nausea, muscle aches and pains, abdominal discomfort and jaundice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fatigue, nausea, muscle aches and pains, abdominal discomfort and mood swings
What treatment is available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not necessary Some people may require hospitalisation if symptoms are severe enough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pegylated interferon Anti-viral medication (entecavir, tenofovir or lamivudine) Some people choose to use complementary therapies for symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment is available and has a 95% cure rate One pill a day for 12 weeks
What are methods of prevention?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vaccination Immunoglobulin within two weeks of exposure Washing hands with soap and water after going to the toilet, and before eating or handling food If travelling to developing countries, consider vaccination and seek advice on food and water risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vaccination Immunoglobulin within 72 hours of exposure Avoid blood-to-blood contact Do not re-use or share any injecting equipment Practice safe sex Avoid sharing personal items (e.g. razor and toothbrushes) Follow standard infection control precautions for first aid Seek medical advice for accidental exposure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid blood-to-blood contact Do not re-use or share any injecting equipment Avoid sharing personal grooming items (e.g. razor and toothbrushes) Follow standard infection control precautions for first aid Seek medical advice for accidental exposure