

# Health Care Education Hepatitis E



## Hidaya Foundation

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*And when I am sick, then He heals me. - - - Al Quran – Ash-Shuraa, Verse 26:80*

### Hepatitis E

**What is Hepatitis E?** Hepatitis E is a liver disease caused by the Hepatitis E virus (HEV) transmitted in much the same way as Hepatitis A virus, through the fecal-oral route.

**Why is the Liver so important?** The liver is the largest, heaviest and one of the most important internal organs. Dark red in color, it weighs 1-1.5 kg and is located behind the lower right part of your ribs. It stores vitamins, sugars, fats and other nutrients from the food you eat and then releases them to the body when needed. It also builds basic chemicals that your body needs to stay healthy. Last but not least; it removes waste products, harmful bacteria and toxic chemicals from your blood. In other words - it is the powerhouse, recycling, and disposal plant of the body. Life is not possible without the liver.

**What are the symptoms of Hepatitis E?** Symptoms include jaundice, fatigue, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, dark (tea colored) urine.

**Can Hepatitis E be prevented?** Hepatitis E can be prevented by washing hands with soap and water after using the bathroom, changing a diaper, and before preparing and eating food. Avoid drinking water (and beverages with ice) of unknown purity, uncooked shellfish, and uncooked fruits or vegetables that are not peeled or prepared.

#### **How is HEV spread?**

- HEV is found in the stool (feces) of humans and animals that are infected with HEV.
- HEV is spread by eating or drinking contaminated food or water.
- Transmission from person to person occurs less commonly than with Hepatitis A virus

- Most outbreaks in developing countries have been associated with contaminated drinking water.

**How do you kill Hepatitis E Virus (HEV)?** To kill HEV, one has to take the same measures that are used to kill Hepatitis A Virus (HAV) – i.e. by heating to 185 degrees F. (85 degrees C.) for one minute. However, HEV can still be spread from cooked food if it gets contaminated after cooking. Adequate chlorination of water kills HEV that may get into the water supply.

**Who should get tested for Hepatitis E?** If you can answer “YES” to any of these questions, please see your doctor immediately because you might be at risk for HEV.

#### **Please answer these questions honestly.**

Currently, or in the past – have you:

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| - Experienced chronic fatigue or tiredness?  | Yes | No |
| - Eaten or drank contaminated food or water? | Yes | No |
| Have you had a blood transfusion?            | Yes | No |

#### **How does Hepatitis E impact Health?**

- There is no chronic (long-term) infection. (A patient with HEV unlike the other Hepatitis viruses is self-limiting.)
- Hepatitis E is more severe among pregnant women, especially in the third trimester

#### **How do you treat and manage Hepatitis E?**

Treatment is supportive. Supportive Treatment involves making a patient comfortable and helping make the pain bearable.

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Sources: Department of Health and Human Services, January 2006 and information available freely on the Internet.

**Disclaimer:** All information provided in this flyer is posted for educational purposes only; it is not meant to be used as medical advice. For any advice, diagnosis, and treatment consult your personal physician.