

Patient information factsheet

Your hepatitis C treatment

Epclusa[®]

We have given you this factsheet because you have been diagnosed with hepatitis C, and have been prescribed a course of Epclusa[®] to treat it.

This is a tablet-based treatment which aims to clear the hepatitis C virus from the body. It is very effective, but is not guaranteed to work for everyone. The team looking after you will explain whether it is likely to completely clear the virus for you.

Your Epclusa[®] treatment will last 12 weeks.

How to take your tablets

Epclusa[®] is a combined tablet, containing two drugs (sofosbuvir 400mg and velpatasvir 100mg).

Take **one** tablet once a day with or without food. The tablet should be swallowed whole and should not be chewed or crushed as it has a bitter taste.

If you **miss a dose** of Epclusa[®] and it is within 18 hours of the normal time you take it, you should take the tablet as soon as possible and then take the next dose at the usual time. If it is after 18 hours, then you should wait and take the next dose at the usual time. **Do not double the dose.**

If you **vomit** within three hours of taking your dose, you should take an additional tablet. If you vomit more than three hours after taking your dose, no further dose is needed.

Medications should be stored in a cool area (below 25°C) but not in a fridge. Please keep in a safe place away from the reach of children.

If you accidentally take too much of your medication, contact us immediately for advice.

Do not stop taking your medication unless we advise you to do so.

Other medications

You must tell us if you are taking any other medications, including prescription or non-prescription medicines, recreational drugs, vitamins and herbal supplements, so we can check that these will not affect your hepatitis C treatment.

Do not stop your treatment unless you have discussed it with us first.

Side effects

Epclusa[®], like all other medications, may have some side effects. Most of these are minor and will usually settle within a few days or weeks. The most commonly reported side effects are headache, fatigue (extreme tiredness) and nausea (feeling sick).

Looking after yourself during your treatment

You can help to lessen any side effects of your treatment by:

- drinking two litres of water a day
- avoiding alcohol

If you have cirrhosis, it is important that you let us know if you experience any of the following:

- confusion or disorientation
- swelling of your tummy or ankles
- yellowing of the whites of your eyes or skin (jaundice)
- coughing blood, vomiting blood or passing any blood in your stools (this can look like black tar)

Contact us if you experience any of these side effects or if you develop vomiting and diarrhoea.

Monitoring your progress

If your virus is undetectable three months after your treatment, you will have reached 'viral clearance' which means that you no longer have hepatitis C. If you put yourself at risk after this, you may get the infection again. You can't become immune to hepatitis C, but you will always have hepatitis C antibodies (virus-fighting cells) in your blood.

Contraception

Although the risk of passing on hepatitis C sexually is small, you should use two methods of contraception (condoms and one other method) throughout your treatment and for a further six months afterwards.

This is because we are not sure what the effects of Epclusa[®] may be on an unborn baby.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Hepatology nurse specialist team

Telephone: **023 8120 4617** (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm)

If you have any concerns outside of these hours, contact NHS **111** for advice or visit your nearest emergency department.

Useful links

www.britishlivertrust.org.uk

www.hepctrust.org.uk

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**