

UOA MS

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Patient Name:

Special Instructions:

Follow Up:

Hepatitis E

Hepatitis E is a viral infection of the liver. It was formerly called enterically transmitted non-A, non-B hepatitis before the hepatitis E virus was discovered. Hepatitis E does not progress to a longstanding (*chronic*) form. However, short-term (*acute*) hepatitis E may be life-threatening in pregnant women. This is especially true in the third trimester of pregnancy. The highest rate of hepatitis E is among people between the ages of 15 and 40 years.

CAUSES

Hepatitis E is caused by the hepatitis E virus (HEV). HEV is found in the stool (*feces*) of people with hepatitis E infection. It is spread by eating or drinking food or water that is contaminated with infected stool. Most outbreaks of this infection have come from contaminated drinking water. This disease is common in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Central America.

SYMPTOMS

- Loss of appetite.
- Feeling very tired.
- Low-grade fever.
- Nausea.
- Vomiting.
- Abdominal pain.
- Dark yellow urine.
- Yellow skin and eyes (*jaundice*).
- Itchy skin.

DIAGNOSIS

Your caregiver can do a blood test to see if you have the disease.

TREATMENT

Hepatitis E usually resolves on its own over several weeks to months. There are no medicines to kill the virus. Treatment focuses on helping the infected person feel more comfortable.

PREVENTION

There is no vaccine for hepatitis E. The only way to prevent the disease is to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus. This means avoiding tap water, ice cubes made from tap water, and uncooked or inadequately cooked foods when traveling to hepatitis E endemic areas with poor sanitation.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Always wash your 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.
- **Avoid** eating uncooked shellfish and uncooked fruits or vegetables that you have not peeled or prepared.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You are unable to eat or drink.
- Nausea or vomiting occurs.
- You feel confused.
- Jaundice becomes more severe.
- You become very sleepy or have trouble waking up.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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