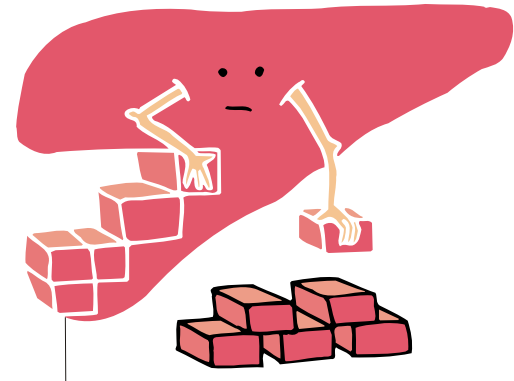
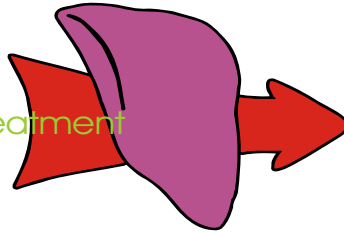


The goal of treatment is to try to get rid of the hepatitis C virus. This allows the liver to repair itself. If other factors are damaging the liver they must be stopped or the damage minimized so that the liver can repair itself



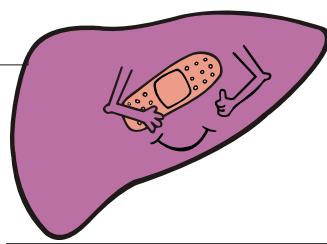
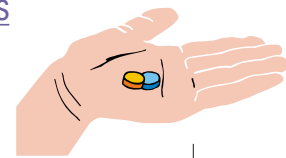
Drug Treatment



Treatment

Get an assessment of your liver. If your liver has some damage but is not really serious shape (cirrhosis), the doctor can put you on drug treatment. Currently the drug of choice is Rebetron (which is interferon given by shot and ribavirin as pills). The treatment is for 6-12 months and works for about half the people who take it. The treatment is tough, it has many affects on your body. Even if treatment is not successful to get rid of the disease, it may allow your liver to heal enough so that you are strong enough to wait for new drugs that are soon to come.

Coinfection with HIV can complicate things. HIV drugs are hard on your liver so you have to take extra care of it and treatment may be longer and not as successful. New forms of interferon called pegylated (long acting) with ribavirin seem to be more successful for people with HIV. Researchers are also working on many new drugs to treat hepatitis C



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