

## Dr.R.Kannan

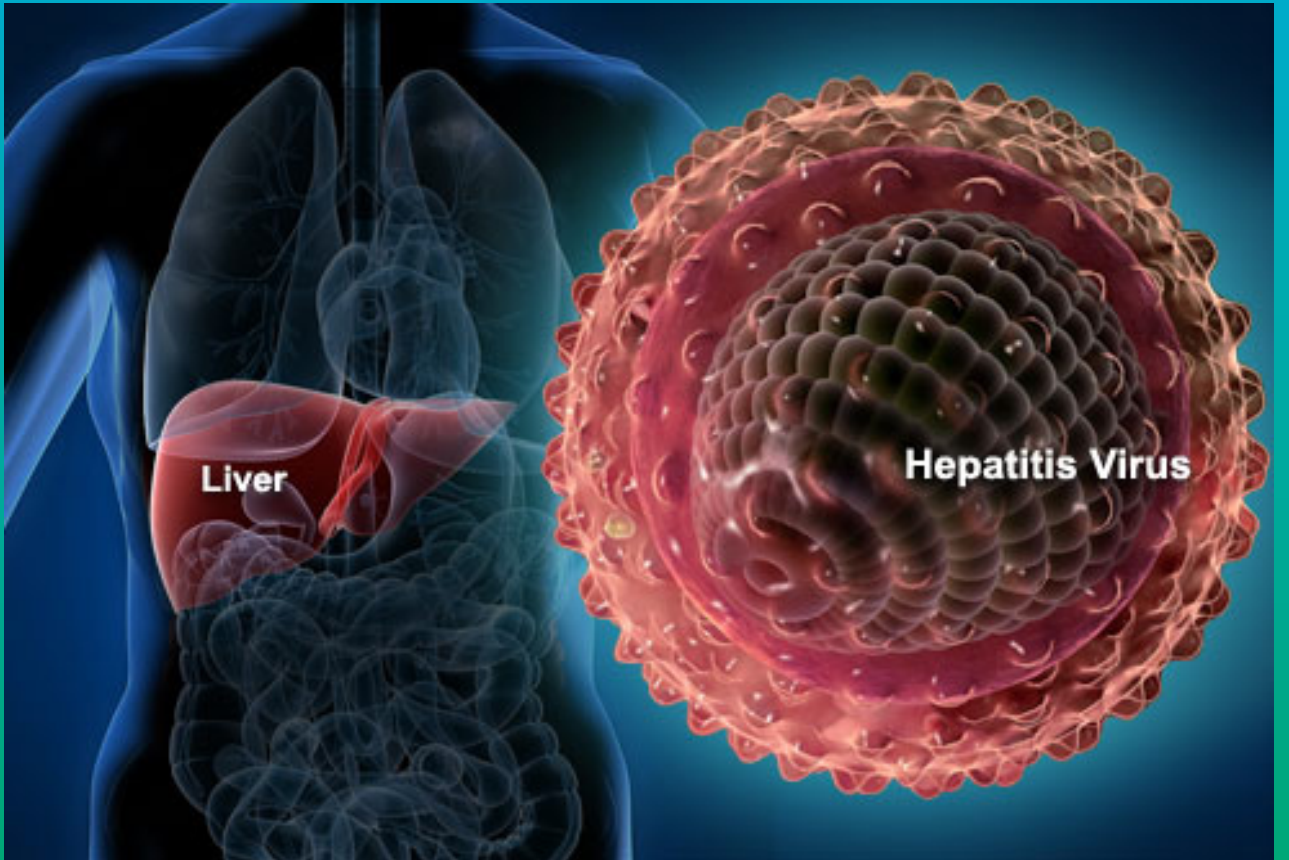
MS, DNB(SGE), FICS(Gastro), MACG(USA), DMAS(France),  
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### What Is Hepatitis?

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver. It may be caused by drugs, alcohol use, or certain medical conditions. But in most cases, it's caused by a virus that infects the liver. This is known as viral hepatitis, and the most common forms are hepatitis A, B, and C.



## Hepatitis Symptoms

Sometimes there are no symptoms of hepatitis in the first weeks after infection -- the acute phase. But when they occur, the symptoms of hepatitis A, B, and C may include fatigue, nausea, poor appetite, belly pain, a mild fever, or yellow skin or eyes (jaundice.) When hepatitis B and C become chronic, they may cause no symptoms for years. By the time there are any warning signs, the liver may already be damaged.



## Hepatitis A: What Happens

Hepatitis A is highly contagious and can spread from person to person in many different settings. It typically causes only a mild illness, and many people who are infected may never realize they are sick at all. The virus almost always goes away on its own and does not cause long-term liver damage.

## Hepatitis A: How Does It Spread?

Hepatitis A usually spreads through contaminated food or water. Food can be tainted when it's touched by an infected person who did not wash his hands after using the bathroom. This transfers tiny amounts of infected stool to the food. Raw shellfish, fruits, vegetables, and undercooked foods are common culprits in hepatitis A outbreaks. The virus can also spread in daycare centers if employees aren't careful about washing hands after changing diapers.



## Hepatitis A: Who Is at Risk?

A prime risk factor for hepatitis A is travelling to or living in a country with high infection rates. You can check the CDC's travel advisories to learn about recent outbreaks. Eating raw foods or drinking tap water can increase your risk while travelling. Children who attend daycare centers also have a higher risk of getting hepatitis A.



## Hepatitis B: What Happens

Many adults who get hepatitis B have mild symptoms for a short time and then get better on their own. But some people are not able to clear the hepatitis B virus from the body, which causes a long-term infection. Nearly 90% of infants who get the virus will carry it with them for life. Over time, chronic hepatitis B can lead to serious problems such as liver damage, liver failure, and liver cancer.



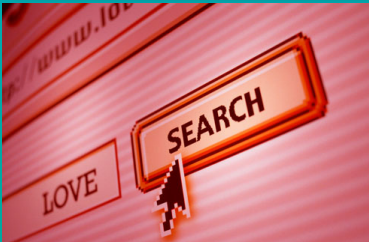
## Hepatitis B: How Does It Spread?

You can get hepatitis B through contact with the blood or body fluids of an infected person. In the U.S., hepatitis B is most often spread through unprotected sex. It's also possible to get hepatitis B by sharing an infected person's needles, razors, or toothbrush. And an infected mother can pass the virus to her baby during childbirth. Hepatitis B is not spread by hugging, sharing food, or coughing.



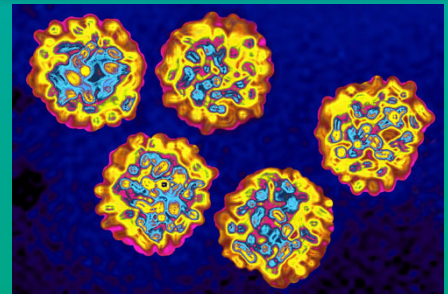
## Hepatitis B: Who Is at Risk?

Anyone can get hepatitis B, but people who have multiple sex partners or inject illegal drugs have a higher risk. Other risk factors include being a health care worker who is exposed to blood or living with someone who has chronic hepatitis B.



## Hepatitis C: What Happens

About 25% of people who get hepatitis C defeat the virus after an acute infection. The rest will carry the virus in their body for the long term. Chronic hepatitis C can cause very serious complications, including liver failure and liver cancer. Fortunately, there are ways to manage the virus and reduce its impact on the liver.



## Hepatitis C: How Does It Spread?

Hepatitis C spreads through infected blood. In the U.S., sharing needles or "works" to inject drugs is the most common cause of infection. Getting a tattoo or body piercing with an infected needle is another means of exposure. A mother may pass the virus to her child at birth. In rare cases, unprotected sex spreads hepatitis C, but the risk appears small. Having multiple sex partners, HIV, or rough sex seems to increase risk for spreading hepatitis C.



to be continued...