

Dietary Advice if you have Hepatitis C

This dietary advice sheet gives some general information to help you make healthy choices about your food. If you become underweight or if the liver disease becomes worse e.g. cirrhosis, ascites, or if you are advised to follow a special diet, please ask your doctor to refer you to a registered dietitian as further dietary advice may be necessary.

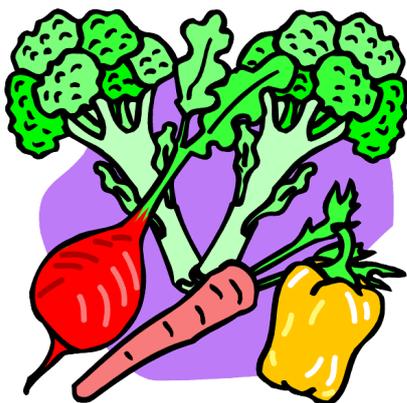
There is no particular diet recommended for sufferers with Hepatitis C that is proven to help everyone however, a sensible well balanced diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables will help keep your liver working as well as possible and help you to feel healthier.

Fruit and Vegetables

All fruit and vegetables provide important vitamins such as the antioxidant vitamins, beta-carotene and vitamin C that help your liver to function.

Fruit and vegetables can be eaten fresh, frozen and canned.

Aim to eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.



One portion is:



- A piece of fresh fruit, such as an apple, small banana, pear, orange or peach
- 2 small fruits, such as plums, tangerines, kiwis
- Large slice of melon
- Big bowl of strawberries, raspberries or other soft fruit
- 3 tablespoons of cooked or canned fruit
- A handful of grapes, cherries or dried fruit
- A medium glass of fruit juice. You should only count 1 glass a day towards your total
- 3 tablespoons of cooked vegetables (this does not include potatoes)
- A small mixed salad

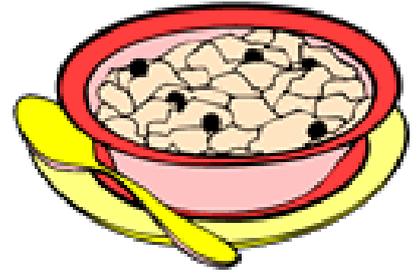
Sample menu plan for five portions:

Meal	Food
Breakfast	Banana on breakfast cereal
Mid-morning	Piece of fresh fruit
Lunchtime	Bowl of salad with a sandwich
Dinner	3 tablespoons of vegetables as part of a meal. Bowl of stewed fruit for dessert or late supper

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Fatty foods

- Most people with Hepatitis C do not need to exclude fats and oils from their diet.
- If you are overweight, been diagnosed with a 'fatty liver' or if your cholesterol level is high, you will need to reduce your fat intake as this may help your liver function.
- To avoid heart disease, obesity, cancer and strokes, a moderately low fat diet is recommended for everyone, including people with Hepatitis C.
- Some people with Hepatitis C have discomfort or nausea after eating fats and oils. It is better therefore to avoid eating very rich, greasy or fatty foods. If you are a normal weight or under weight, try to meet your energy needs by eating more of other foods such as starchy carbohydrates e.g. potatoes, cereal, rice, pasta, bread.



Protein foods

- Meat, chicken, turkey, fish, shellfish, eggs, cheese, beans including soya products, Quorn, nuts and seeds are all good sources of protein.
- Extra protein is not needed in your diet when you have Hepatitis C.
- Make sure eggs are well cooked.

Fluid

- Remember to drink plenty of fluid, at least 6 – 8 glasses a day.
- This can be water, squash, (no added sugar is healthier), fruit juice, sugar-free fizzy drinks, herbal teas, skimmed milk. You can also continue with tea and coffee in moderation.

Sugar

- Sugar provides no nutrients apart from energy, so if you are trying to have a healthy, well balanced, nutritious diet, use sugar in moderation and use even less if you are trying to lose weight.
- If you are experiencing unwanted weight loss, eat more sugar and sugary foods as this will increase your energy intake without bulking you up.

Alcohol

- Alcohol can be harmful to the liver and is not recommended if you have Hepatitis C.
- You are more likely to develop cirrhosis of the liver (permanent life-threatening damage) if you drink alcohol when you have Hepatitis C.

