

Diagnosis

You were tested for Hepatitis C and your doctor has just told you have had a positive test result.

You may be shocked, confused and upset. It is possible that you have lots of questions and you need answers.

This leaflet will give you some of the information you might need today.

Receiving a positive result means the doctors have found Hepatitis C antibodies in your blood.

These antibodies mean that at some point in your life you have been in contact with Hepatitis C.

You now need another blood test, (known as a PCR test) This second test can tell you if you have the virus Hepatitis C in your blood. It may take up to a month to get the results.

If this second test is also positive, it means that you are living with Hepatitis C. If this second test is negative, it means you are not living with Hepatitis C.

What is Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is a virus, that lives in your blood.

It is commonly called Hep C.

Hep C is a virus that affects your liver.

Medical people know this virus as HCV (Hepatitis C Virus).

Health Care

You can live a normal life with Hep C. You are likely to live a full life span.

Your doctor will want to try and find out how long you may have been living with Hep C and how active the virus is within you.

Your doctor will also try and find out what type of Hep C you have. This is called your genotype. Any medication you have will depend on what your genotype is.

Some people (about 30%) are able to clear Hep C without any medications. Your doctor will want to wait for a while before talking to you about medication. This is so they can discover if you are able to clear the virus from your blood without any help.

In Ireland, consultation appointments and medication are free for everyone with Hep C.

It makes no difference who you are, where you come from or how much money you have. The medication is free for you if you need it.

Your Family

Try not to worry too much about your family. Things you do everyday like hugging, kissing, dressing, eating and drinking will not pass Hep C on to anyone, including your children.

You can behave as you always have done with your loved ones, and they will not be at risk.

You do not have to tell anyone today

This diagnosis can be difficult to understand and there are many myths about it.

Once you have told someone you cannot take it back. You need to think about who you tell and why you want to tell them.

Our support workers can help to decide what is the best thing for you, as can your other health care professionals, or our peer support workers.

A few questions answered

Does my partner need testing?

- Yes. We can help you decide the best way to talk to your partner about testing. They do not need to be tested right away, but you may need support to talk to them at some point.

What treatment can I get?

- You can get medicines that can help to clear the virus. You can also get medicines to assist with any symptoms that you may already have because of Hep C.

- One type of medication is an injection over a period of time
- Another type of medication is a tablet, taken every day, for 12 weeks
- Some people do not need treatment

How much will my treatment cost?

- The medicines will cost you nothing. You may need to travel to Dublin, Galway or Cork to receive it.

We invite you to visit us

GOSHH is a warm friendly space in Limerick City centre.

We are a team of people who understand the impact a hepatitis C result can have on you and your life; and between us we have a great deal of personal and professional experience.

All our services are free.

We are open on:-

Mon	2.00pm — 5.00pm
Tues - Fri	9.30am — 5.00pm
Closed for lunch	1.00pm — 2.00pm

If you would like to see a support worker just ring or email to make an appointment.

We can meet you somewhere private.

We look forward to meeting you.



We are where the **RED** pin is.

If you would like to talk to someone, you can contact Billie

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Living With Hepatitis C



Things you need to know today.