

HEPATITIS

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Definition:

Hepatitis implies injury to liver characterized by presence of inflammatory cells in the liver tissue.

Types:

1. Hepatitis A; via oral fecal rout.
2. Hepatitis B; via blood and blood products.
3. Hepatitis C; via blood and blood products.
4. Hepatitis D; usually occurs with Hepatitis B patients.
5. Hepatitis E; similar to Hepatitis A virus, via oral fecal rout.

Signs & symptoms:

Majority of patients will remain asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic, abnormal blood tests being the only manifestation. 2

Features may be related to extent of liver damage or the cause of hepatitis. Many experience return of symptoms related to acute hepatitis. Jaundice can be a late feature and may indicate extensive damage. Other features include abdominal fullness from enlarged liver or spleen, low grade fever and fluid retention (ascites). Extensive damage and scarring of liver i.e. cirrhosis leads to weight loss, easy bruising and bleeding tendencies. Acne, abnormal menstruation, lung scarring, inflammation of the thyroid gland and kidneys may be present in women with autoimmune hepatitis.

Prophylaxis:

- By vaccination (there is no vaccine for C virus).
- Personal hygiene.