

|   | Hepatitis A   | Hepatitis B  | Hepatitis C   |
|---|---|--|---|
| How common is it in Singapore?                                | Not very common.  | Common. About 4% of the local population are hepatitis B carriers.   | Very uncommon.  |
| Mode of infection   | Eating contaminated seafood or unhygienic food.   | Vertical transmission - from mother to child during childbirth.<br><br>Horizontal transmission - through blood contact, sexual intercourse.  | Usually through transfusion with contaminated blood or sharing of needles with hepatitis C carriers.  |
| What are the symptoms?  | Jaundice, lethargy, fever.  | Jaundice, lethargy, fever.   | Jaundice, lethargy, fever.  |
| Are there risks/ complications?                               | < 1% develop liver failure.   | 15%-40% may develop long-term problems such as liver cirrhosis or liver cancer.  | 20% may develop cirrhosis (hardened liver) over 20 years. Patients with cirrhosis risk developing liver cancer. About 2% of these patients are afflicted with liver cancer. |
| Is treatment/ medication available?                           | Yes. Mainly supportive treatment. Symptomatic treatment is provided. Patients are watched closely for acute liver failure.      | Yes. Controllable with antiviral drugs. There are 2 groups of drugs available. One group stimulates the immune system to fight the virus. The other suppresses the viral replication directly. | Yes. Controllable with antiviral drugs.   |
| Can it be treated completely?                                 | Yes.  | No, but risk of progression to liver cirrhosis or cancer can be greatly reduced by antiviral drugs.  | Yes, about 50% can be cured by current antiviral drugs.   |
| Precautions:<br>- Dietary modifications<br>- Lifestyle habits | - Avoid eating at unhygienic places.<br><br>- Avoid going to hepatitis A endemic areas.<br><br>- Vaccinate against hepatitis A. | - Obtain hepatitis B immunity vaccine.<br><br>- Do not share needles.  | Do not share needles.   |
| Should family members go for screening?                       | Not necessary.  | Yes.   | Risk of transmission through sexual intercourse is < 5% so spouses are advised to go for screening.   |
| Immunisations   | Available.<br>2 injections 6 months apart (long-lasting protection).  | Available.<br>3 injections over 6 months (long-lasting protection).  | Not available.  |