

Getting Ready for Hepatitis C Treatment

A GUIDE



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PAUKTUUTIT
INUIT WOMEN OF CANADA
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**THINKING ABOUT GETTING
TREATMENT FOR HEPATITIS C?**

This booklet will help you prepare.



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The Canadian Inuit HIV/AIDS Network

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To help you prepare for treatment, this booklet has questions for you to ask about different areas of your life. Some topics may take more time to work through than others. They can be done in any order, but it might be helpful to begin with “My Personal Bill of Rights” and “Talking to my health care provider.”

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KNOWLEDGE

Personal Bill of Rights

Below is a “Personal Bill of Rights”. These ideas may help you speak up for yourself as you seek care and treatment.

Personal Bill of Rights

1. I have the right to ask for what I want.
2. I have the right to refuse services or resources that don't meet my needs.
3. I have the right to change my mind.
4. I have the right to express my feelings, whether positive or negative.
5. I have the right to decide what I think is important to me.
6. I have the right to speak up for myself.
7. I have the right to feel scared or afraid.
8. I have the right to not have to justify my decisions.
9. I have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
10. I have the right to have fun.
11. I have the right to expect honesty from others.
12. I have the right to rely on others for help or to speak up for me.
13. I have the right to ask questions and to receive answers in my own language.
14. I have the right to say that I am not ready.
15. I have the right to receive copies of anything that I sign.
16. I have the right to see my medical records.

KNOWLEDGE



Talking to my health care provider

ESTHER AGLUKARK-POWELL RN
Role Model

Below are questions to ask your health care provider about treatment.

What are my options for treatment? How long will my treatment take/last?

- If I have HIV/Diabetes, will it affect my treatment?
- Is it safe to continue my medications for other health conditions?
- What are the side effects of treatment?
- How do I deal with side effects I am concerned about?

List other questions you have about treatment.

I want to know _____

I want to know _____

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KNOWLEDGE

Are my things ready?



To help get your things ready, ask:

- Do I have a safe place to live so I can rest?
- Will I stay at a medical boarding home?
- How long will I be there?
- Can I have a family member accompany me?
- If I move out, is support still available? If not, where do I get assistance if I move out? (e.g. food, rent, etc.)
- How can people leave me a telephone message?
- Will I be able to get to appointments?
- Do I have a fridge to keep my medication cool?
- Can I always get food when I need it?

What else do I still need to do to get ready for treatment?

Contact numbers for urban centres and additional services:

KNOWLEDGE

What are my financial supports?



Making it easy.

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We Financial customer service: Visa Prepaid 24/7 1-855-887-3946 other services 1-866-963-2477

Below are questions to think about or to ask your income support worker or Service Canada to help you sort out financial support before you start treatment.

What are my options for treatment?

How long will my treatment take/last?

- Who can help me to understand my finance and employment issues?
- If I can't work, what can I do for income?
- Where can I go to get help with costs related to treatment?
- Will I need to apply to receive benefits while I am on treatment?
- If my work is seasonal (only during certain times of the year) when is the best time for me to start treatment?

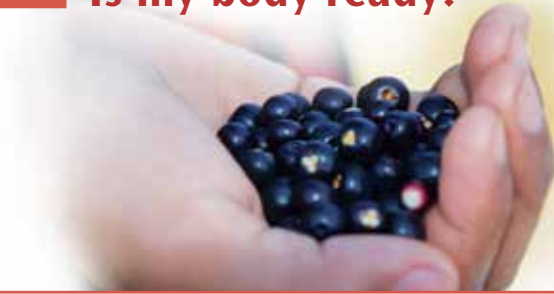
Do I need to apply for anything else before I start treatment? _____

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STRENGTH

Is my body ready?



Below are questions to think about or to ask your health care provider to help you **get your body ready** for treatment.

What are my options for treatment? How long will my treatment take/last?

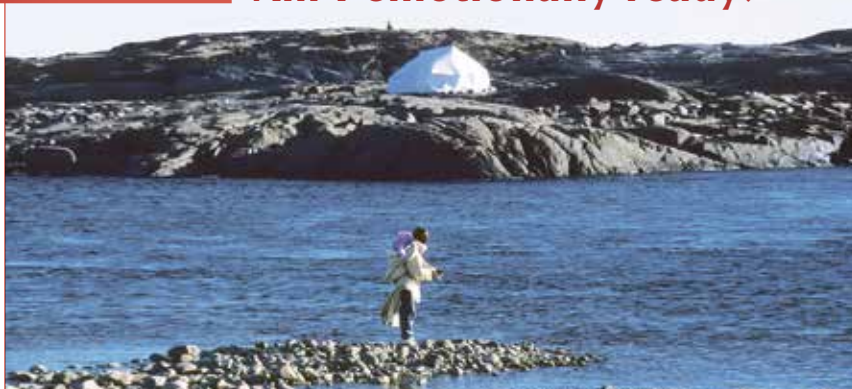
- Are there other health issues I need to deal with before treatment?
- What appointments with other health care providers will I need? (for example, dental checkup, eye health exam)
- Am I okay with having blood tests and injections?
- How can I keep my liver healthy?
- Diet (eat healthy)
- What foods should I eat or avoid?
- Exercise (how much should I get?)
- Avoid alcohol (how much can I have?)

List other questions you have about treatment.

I want to know _____
_____?

STRENGTH

Am I emotionally ready?



What can I do to get emotionally ready for treatment?

What can I do to get ready for treatment, mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually:

- Have I told my friends and family that I am going for treatment?
- How is my mental health? Do I have a place to meditate?
- Do I need a counselor? If yes, where can I find one?
- How do I deal with difficult times and low moods?
- How do I deal with sleep problems?
- Am I able to respond in healthy ways to stressful situations?
- What will I do if I am having a difficult time?

- Who can I call? _____
- _____



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○ How can I relax? _____

○ What else can I do? _____

List other questions you have about treatment.

List available supports: _____

List ways of using positive coping skills: _____

STRENGTH

Are my family, friends and community ready?



How do I build my support network for treatment?

To help get your friends and family ready ask:

- Do the people who care about me know I am starting treatment?
- Have I told my family and friends?
- Who will be able to support me through treatment?
 - What types of support do they offer?
 - How do I get them more information?
 - Can they come with me to appointments or see the doctor?
 - Who can they talk to if they notice any changes in me?
- Do my friends or family have questions/concerns about my treatment? Do they know about the possible side effects?



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- What can they do to help me?
- Are there spiritual or other supports I might need?
- Is there anyone I still need to talk to before I start treatment?

It is important that you share the news with your family. You will need the support from them during your treatment. Sometimes holding onto a secret can have a negative impact on one's emotional, spiritual and physical health.

Example on how to tell your friends and family:

Tell them that you had a test to be checked for Hepatitis C and that it came back positive. Explain to them that they can't get it by hugging, or kissing or being in the same room with you or through the air, and that the only way it is passed to another person is from blood to blood. Tell them it is treatable and that you will be getting treatment. Share with them it would make you happy if they understand this and support you through it.

STRENGTH

Is my support team ready?



Below are questions to think about or to ask your health care provider to help get your **support team** ready before you start treatment.

To help get your local support team ready, ask:

- What supports can my local health care providers offer me?
- What other supports can I get on-line or by phone?
- Who can I talk to if I need help?
- Who can I talk to about issues that may come up when I am on treatment?
- Who can I call in an emergency situation?

Who is my support team?

WISDOM

Have I decided?

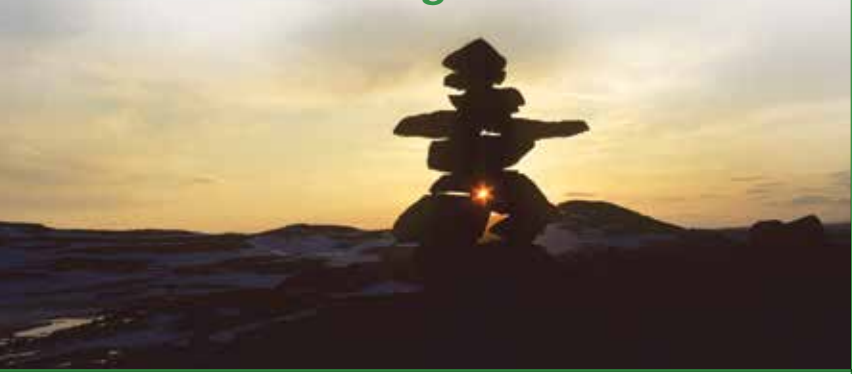


What goals do I need to set out for myself and my family while doing treatment? Is this the best time to start treatment?

To help get your local support team ready, ask:

- Do I want to be on treatment?
- Am I able to commit to several months on treatment?
- Where will my motivation to stay on treatment come from?

If I am having a difficult time, what can I tell myself about why I am doing treatment?

WISDOM**Is it the right time?****To help get your local support team ready, ask:**

- Am I prepared/ready?
- Has my family been informed? Are they ready?
- Is my body ready?
- Do I have a counsellor?
- Am I planning on moving?
- Do I have responsibilities I'll need to get help with (e.g., taking care of young children)?
- Will a family member come with me?
- Will my family and I be able to balance life and treatment?
- Do I need to delay treatment for a little while?

Will anything be changing for me in the next few months?



This resource was adapted from a resource created by the Attendance for Hepatitis C Care Project. It would not have been possible without the valuable contributions from individuals affected by hepatitis C, service providers and representatives from First Nations, Métis and Inuit organizations across Canada.

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For more information, visit www.pauktuutit.ca or www.bccdc.ca and type "Attendance Project" in the search box.

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