

Hepatitis: Complementary/Alternative Medicine

During the period before liver involvement a person with viral hepatitis may experience a loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, and flu-like symptoms that can occur two weeks to one month before liver involvement, depending on the incubation period of the virus

Either abrupt or insidious occurrence of symptoms

Tender enlarged liver, fever, jaundice (yellow appearance of the skin)

Dark urine (due to elevated bilirubin levels)

Normal-to-low white blood cell count, markedly elevated liver enzyme level (aminotransferases) in the blood, elevated bilirubin levels

QUICK REVIEW

Hepatitis is a serious disease, requiring the care of a physician.

Several nutrients and herbs have been shown to inhibit viral reproduction, improve immune system function, and greatly stimulate regeneration of the damaged liver cells.

In the case of acute exposure to the hepatitis B virus (HBV), hyperimmune globulin (HBIG)-a concentrated solution of immune globulins specific to HBV-is administered by injection.

- The therapeutic goals of natural hepatitis treatment are to protect the liver and to prevent further damage to the liver by supporting the immune system.

- During the acute phase, the focus should be on replacing fluids through consumption of vegetable broths, diluted vegetable juices (diluted fifty

In chronic cases, the diet should be low in saturated fats, simple carbohydrates (sugar, white flour, fruit juice, honey, etc.), oxidized fatty acids (fried oils), and animal products.

High doses of vitamin C (40 to 100 grams orally or intravenously) can greatly relieve acute viral hepatitis in two to four days.

- There is good clinical data to support the effectiveness of orally administered bovine (beef) thymus extracts in treating acute and chronic viral hepatitis.

- Licorice exerts many actions that are beneficial in the treatment of acute and chronic hepatitis, including: protecting the liver; enhancing the immune system; and potentiating interferon.

- Silymarin, the flavonoid complex from milk thistle, is effective in treating both acute and chronic viral hepatitis.

- A growing body of scientific research indicates that silymarin phytosome is better absorbed and produces better clinical results than unbound silymarin.

TREATMENT SUMMARY

Hepatitis is a serious disease requiring the care of a physician. The therapeutic goals are to prevent further damage to the liver by supporting the immune system and to protect the liver. Bed rest is important during the acute phase of viral hepatitis, with slow resumption of activities as health improves. Strenuous exertion, alcohol, and other liver-toxic drugs and chemicals should be avoided.

During the contagious phase (two to three weeks before symptoms appear to three weeks after), careful hygiene and avoiding close contact with others are important. In particular, once diagnosis is made, work in a day care center, restaurant, or similar environs is not recommended.

Diet

During the acute phase, the focus should be on replacing fluids through consumption of vegetable broths, diluted vegetable juices (diluted by half with water), and herbal teas.

In the chronic phase, a natural foods diet, low in saturated fats, simple carbohydrates (sugar, white flour, fruit juice, honey, etc.), oxidized fatty acids (fried oils), and animal fat and high in fiber is recommended.

Nutritional Supplements

Follow the recommendations given in DETOXIFICATION.

- Vitamin C: 1,000 mg three times per day (in acute cases: intravenous vitamin C, 50-100 g per day)
- Liver extracts: 500-1,000 mg crude polypeptides per day
- Thymus extracts: equivalent to 120 mg pure polypeptides with molecular weights less than 10,000, or roughly 750 mg of the crude polypeptide fraction
- DelImmune is an immune system stimulant available @ NutritionWise in Tequesta, it's been quite effective in helping to get the Hepatitis C virus under control thus lowering the titers/viral load.

Botanical Medicines

Glycyrrhiza glabra (licorice): Powdered root: 1-2 g three times per day

Fluid extract (1:1): 2-4 ml three times per day

Solid (dry powdered) extract (5% glycyrrhethinic acid content): 250-500 mg three times per day

NOTE: If licorice is to be used over a long period of time, it is necessary to increase the intake of potassium-rich foods.

- *Silybum marianum* (milk thistle):

The dose of milk thistle is based on its silymarin content. For this reason, standardized extracts are preferred. The best results are achieved at higher dosages: 140 to 210 mg of silymarin three times per day. The dosage for silymarin phytosome is 120 mg two to three times per day between meals.