

WHAT IS VIRAL HEPATITIS?

Viral hepatitis is the inflammation of the liver caused by a set of viral infections that can cause scarring, cirrhosis and liver failure. There are five types of viral hepatitis infections worldwide — hepatitis A, B, C, D and E — with A, B and C being predominant in the United States. Hepatitis D is seen mostly in people who also have the hepatitis B virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes that people who use drugs, as well as people who are living with HIV, are at an increased risk for acquiring and transmitting viral hepatitis.

People living with HIV (PLWH) should be vaccinated against hepatitis A and B, and should also be tested for hepatitis B and C. People with hepatitis B and C may not be aware of their status or seek available treatment.

Some common symptoms of hepatitis include:

- Fatigue
- Malaise
- Flu-like symptoms such as headache, body aches, low-grade fever
- Lack of appetite
- Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain
- Jaundice
- Diarrhea
- Itching of the skin
- Tea- or dark-colored urine
- Pale bowel movements