

## TRANSMISSION, SYMPTOMS AND OVERVIEW OF **HEPATITIS A, B AND C**

Each type of hepatitis virus affects the body in different ways, has different modes of transmission and has its own forms of treatment. As such, each viral hepatitis infection should be treated as a different form of infection.

Hepatitis A virus causes an acute infection that people are able to clear in a short amount of time, usually about six months. Most people are able to recover without the aid of treatment or medication. Hepatitis B and C, however, may develop into an acute infection that could lead to chronic liver disease.

### **About Hepatitis C (HCV)**

Hepatitis C was discovered in 1989 and is a single-stranded RNA virus that is of the Flaviviridae family of viruses. A largely unstable virus, it has six major genotypes and more than 50 subtypes, which help it resist the body's immune system and even antiviral medications. For this reason, there is not a vaccine to prevent against HCV. The most common genotype in the U.S. is genotype 1, accounting for over 80% of people with HCV. Reinfection with HCV is possible, and people can be infected with more than one genotype of HCV. The medications available are genotype-specific, so the establishment of an HCV genotype is essential in treatment.