CENTRE MODERNE RADIOLOGIE - ECHOGRAPHIE Dr. LAMA BERJAOUI

Spécialiste en Radiologie - Echographie Scanner - Résonnance Magnétique PARIS - FRANCE



LABORATOIRE MODERNE ANALYSES MEDICALES

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What is Hepatitis?

Hepatitis is an epidemic disease that can be caused by different viruses including hepatitis viruses A, B, C, D or E.

Hepatitis A and E are not chronic and are mostly present in areas of low hygiene. It is usually transmitted through fecal to oral route.

On the other hand, hepatitis B and C can be chronic. It infects the liver and remains with the patient all his life. It could be deadly. Additionally, hepatitis D is only present with some cases of hepatitis B.

It is important for people that suspect having hepatitis B and C to get tested. It is an easy procedure (a simple blood test), and the earlier it is discovered the higher are the chances of survival!



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Hepatitis B

How dangerous is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a liver disease that remains with you your whole life. It is caused by hepatitis B virus (HBV). It increases the chances of liver cirrhosis or liver cancer. It is a very contagious disease; it is 100 times more contagious than Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). There are more than 350 million cases of hepatitis B world wide annually. It also causes around 1 million death cases annually, which makes it the 10th most common death case in the world.

Symptoms:

The symptoms may appear in almost 70% of adults with hepatitis B. It may take months or years after the infection for the symptoms to appear, including:

- Jaundice
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite or vomiting
- Dark urine color
- High fever
- Joint pain

Routes of transmission:

Hepatitis B is transmitted through blood or sexual intercourse. You may get infected in cases of:

- Infected mother during delivery
- Sexual intercourse with an infected individual
- Substance abuse through injections
- Exposed to infected blood, needle-stick injuries (Medical field)



Precautions & treatment:

- Avoid being exposed to the above routes of transmission and take a vaccine!
- It is important for pregnant women to test for hepatitis B

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- It is essential to make sure all new born babies are vaccinated within 12 hours of being born to avoid transmission of the virus in case the mother was infected.
- After being infected, the only solution is taking the appropriate treatment. Now a day, there are many successful treatments available. Contact your doctor for more information regarding the proper treatment to avoid further damage of the liver.



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Hepatitis C

How dangerous is hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is the most common cause of chronic hepatitis. It infects more than 170 million people around the world.

The main cause of hepatitis C is hepatitis C virus (HCV). The main route of transmission is through infected blood. 95% of infected individuals carry the virus all their life without having any symptoms or any clue that they have the infection. Hence, they are at high risk for liver cirrhosis or cancer.

Therefore, it is called the silent disease since the symptoms only appear in 5% of the cases which include:

- Fatigue
- Joint and muscle pain
- Chills
- Loss of appetite or vomiting
- Jaundice
- Soft belly
- Unexplained loss of weight
- Anxiety/ Nervous breakdowns

Routes of transmission:

- Needle-stick injuries (Medical field)
- Blood transfusions
- Sharing of non sterile needles
- Dialysis patients
- Acupuncture treatments or tattoo by non sterile needles
- Sharing of personal care utensils with an infected individual (razors, toothbrush, nail clipper)
- Sexual intercourse
- Rarely, in 5% of the cases it is transmitted from pregnant mother to baby during the delivery

Possible treatment:

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- There is no vaccine yet!
- Avoid contact of infected blood
- There are successful treatments available

References:

Lebanese Association of Gastroenterology (LSGE)