

Hepatitis means that the liver is inflamed. This inflammation (swelling) can be caused by germs, viruses, some medicines, some diseases, or heavy alcohol use.

# Hepatitis

## Three common types of hepatitis are caused by viruses:

- ◆ Hepatitis A virus causes hepatitis A.
- ◆ Hepatitis B virus causes hepatitis B.
- ◆ Hepatitis C virus causes hepatitis C.

These three kinds of hepatitis can be acute. Hepatitis B and C can become chronic.

## Acute viral hepatitis:

- ◆ Is caused by hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C viruses.
- ◆ Usually occurs within a few weeks after you first get infected with the virus.
- ◆ Can be mild, severe or even life-threatening.
- ◆ Hepatitis B or C can sometimes lead to long-term (chronic) infection.

**Chronic hepatitis B and C are serious health problems.**



Model of the human liver.

### Chronic viral hepatitis:

- ◆ Is caused only by hepatitis B and hepatitis C viruses.
- ◆ May be lifelong.
- ◆ Can cause liver damage, cirrhosis (scarring of the liver), and liver cancer.

**Symptoms can appear anywhere from 2 to 6 weeks after contact with the virus.**

### What are the signs of hepatitis?

You may not have any sign of hepatitis. Or, you may have:

- ◆ Yellow skin or eyes (jaundice).
- ◆ Tiredness.
- ◆ Fever.
- ◆ Nausea.
- ◆ Vomiting.
- ◆ Loss of appetite.
- ◆ Stomach pain.
- ◆ Light stools.
- ◆ Dark urine.