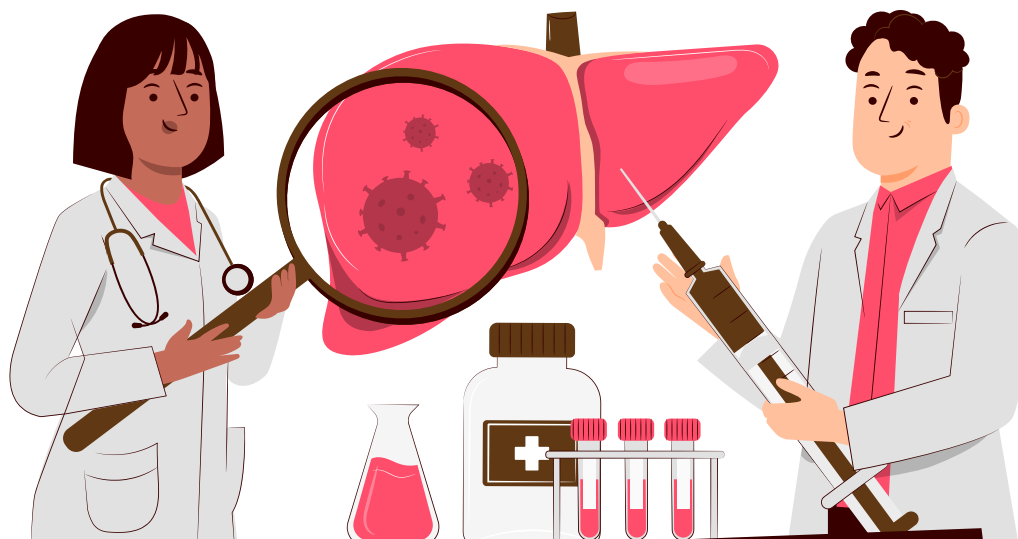


# ALCOHOL AND HEPATITIS C

## THE IMPACTS OF ALCOHOL ON THE PROGRESSION OF HEPATITIS C VIRUS-RELATED LIVER DISEASE



### Hepatitis C

#### What is Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV).

#### What are the risks?

Many untreated chronic HCV infections develop into cirrhosis, which is the leading cause of HCV-related deaths.

Although effective treatments for HCV infections exist, there were still over **500,000** new liver cirrhosis cases globally caused by HCV infections in 2019.

### ALCOHOL

Alcohol use decreases spontaneous remission of HCV and plays a significant role in worsening the course of liver disease in HCV-infected individuals.

Each alcoholic drink per day (defined as having 12 g of pure alcohol) increases the risk of liver cirrhosis by approximately **11%**.

The risk of liver cirrhosis increases even at low levels of alcohol consumption.



### WHAT CAN BE DONE?

#### THERE IS NO SAFE LIMIT OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION FOR HCV-INFECTED INDIVIDUALS

#### By Drinkers

**1. Cease or reduce alcohol consumption** as much possible if you are infected with HCV in order to slow progression of liver disease.

**2. Seek help** if your alcohol consumption prevents initiation of or interferes with antiviral treatment for hepatitis C. In many healthcare systems, patients with HCV are ineligible for some treatment interventions.

#### By Healthcare and Policymakers

**1.** Quantify alcohol use routinely in any patient under liver disease treatment.

**2.** In the absence of universal screening and diagnosis of HCV, those with higher levels of alcohol consumption should be targeted for screening programs.

**3.** Increase health literacy on alcohol and HCV for the public, health professionals, and policymakers for a more integrated response.

**4.** Support and promote population-based policies aimed at reducing alcohol consumption to reduce the burden of alcohol-related harms and comorbidities.

### The Sustainable Development Goals



#### Aim to eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health problem by 2030

Addressing alcohol use among HCV-infected individuals can considerably enhance global efforts to achieve this goal.

### Sources

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