
Hepatitis C Choices in Care

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Making the Most of Your Choices

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It's All About Choice



- Choosing Therapies
- Choosing Providers
- Choosing Wellness

Choosing Your Therapy: Guidelines

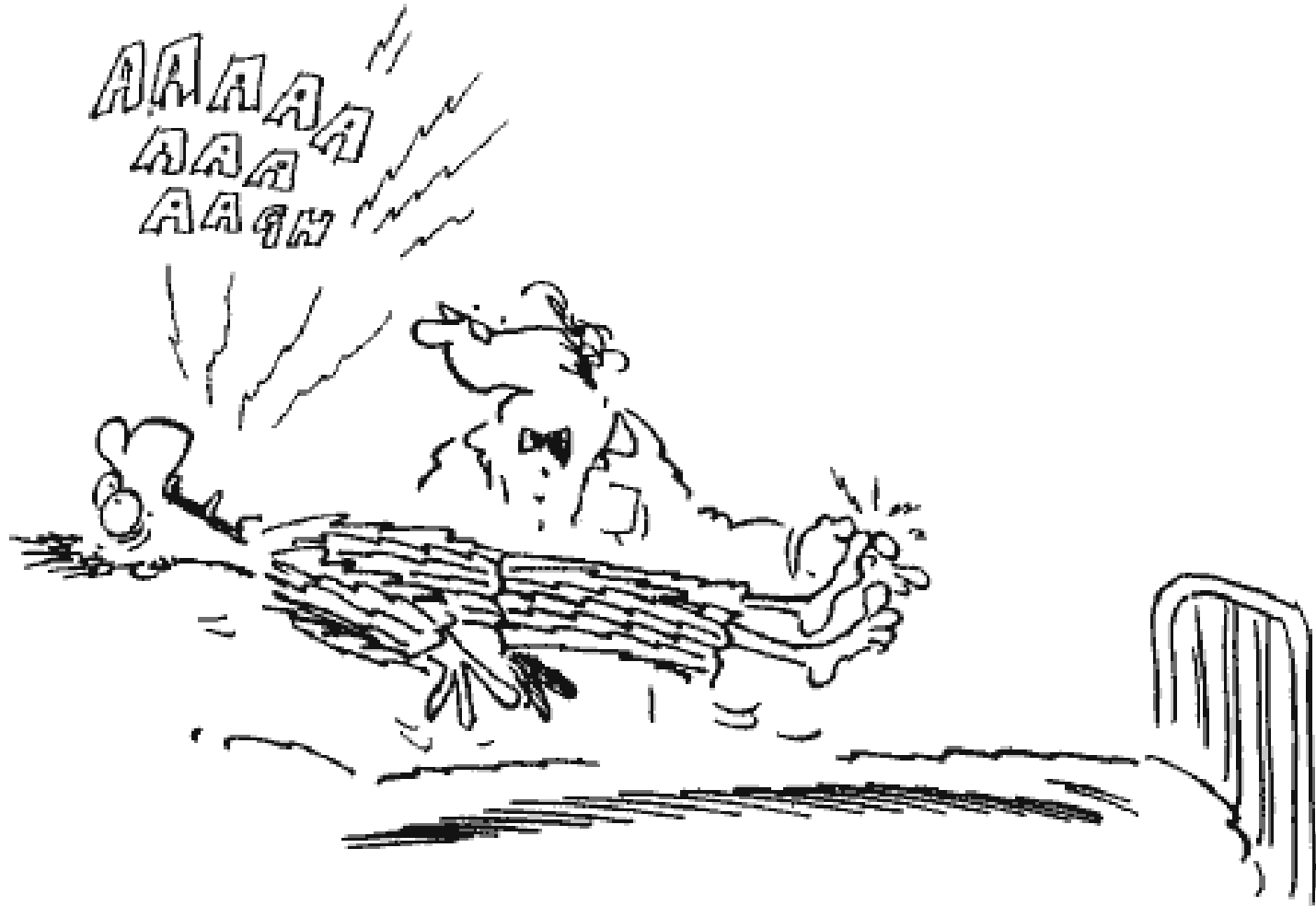
- There is no “right answer.”
- One size does not “fit all” – different goals
- Do your homework
- Understand with your mind – choose with your heart
- Few decisions in life are irrevocable

Practical Tips



- Use reputable information sources
- Ask questions
- Err on the side of safety
- Establish clear goals and measures of success from the start.

Choosing Providers



"That hurts, does it?"

Is there an ideal Health Care Provider?



Yes – but it's not the same doctor for everyone.

How to choose a Healthcare Provider

- Know YOUR needs and preferences
 - Decisive, open-minded, young, experienced

- Know his/her skills
 - Board-certification, advanced training
 - Local medical society, medical boards

Choosing Providers

- Find a good, open-minded PCP (MD, DO, ND)
- Ask about his/her willingness to explore alternatives with you; shared philosophy
- Takes an active interest in what you propose
- Ask for CAM referrals from the PCP
- Keep your PCP updated: progress reports from you and the CAM provider

Choosing Providers

- Primary Care
 - Internist (adults above 16-18)
 - Family Practitioner (all ages)

Types of Doctors

- M.D. Allopathic Medical Doctor
- D.O. Osteopathic Medical School
- N.D. Naturopathic School
- D.C. Chiropractic School

Choosing Providers: Naturopathic

- Find a graduate of an accredited 4-year program (www.naturopathic.org)
- ND's are educated in the same basic sciences as MD's but also studies holistic and nontoxic approached to therapy
- Passed NPLEX (Naturopathic Physicians Licensing Examination)
- Licensed (in 13 states plus DC) w/prescriptive license

Choosing Providers: Acupuncture & Traditional Chinese Medicine

- Legislation regulates the practice of acupuncture in 40+ states and the District of Columbia.
 - About a quarter of these states grant licenses to practice acupuncture.
- In unregulated states, acupuncture is technically illegal unless performed by a physician.
- In an unlicensed state, trained acupuncturists will be nationally certified by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM).

Choosing Providers: Integrative Medicine Practitioner

Integrative Medicine is healing-oriented medicine that takes account of the whole person (body, mind, and spirit), including all aspects of lifestyle.

It emphasizes the therapeutic relationship and makes use of all appropriate therapies, both conventional and alternative.

To find and Integrative Practitioner go to: CAHCIM (www.imconsortium.org)

Choosing Providers: Integrative Medicine Practitioner

- Be sure your integrative medicine doctor is a qualified conventional medical practitioner and has expertise in treating chronic hepatitis C. If one isn't available that has expertise in treating hepatitis C, you can ask them for a referral to the local gastroenterologist or hepatologist.
- Your physician should have an M.D. (medical doctor) or D.O. (doctor of osteopathy) degree from a recognized medical school.

The Importance of Certification

- Certification shows that your doctor has the training he/she says claims.
- The certification status a doctor can be verified on the Internet at www.abim.org or www.abfp.org.
- Within certain medical specialties, there are also subspecialties.
- Subspecialty board certification (such as gastroenterology, a subspecialty of internal medicine) can also be verified at www.abms.org.
- American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (AANP) www.naturopathic.org

Certification for Other Providers

The American College for Advancement in Medicine (ACAM) www.acamnet.org

- ❑ The American College for Advancement in Medicine (ACAM) is a nonprofit medical society dedicated to educating physicians and other health care professionals on the latest findings and emerging procedures in preventive/nutritional medicine.

How to decide which modalities to explore

- Your goals
- Your current health status
- Books, websites (e.g., Hepatitis C Choices)

Patient's Roles and Responsibilities

- Cooperate with your providers
- Make a commitment to treatment
- Ask questions
- Be honest
- Keep ALL providers informed

Necessary Caution for Liver Health

- “First, do no harm”
 - Avoid hepatotoxins
 - Over the counter medications (alcohol, pain relievers, etc)
 - Avoid iron supplements
 - Certain prescription medicine
 - Hepatotoxic herbs
 - Hepatotoxic contaminants in botanicals, formulas, and supplements
 - Avoid too much of a “good” thing (more is not always better)

Necessary Caution for Liver Health

- Take a critical eye toward products marketed to people with hepatitis C.



If it seems too good to be true...

- The FDA cannot always protect you
- Err on the side of safety
- Research ingredients, if possible
- Discuss it with your healthcare team



Yes, it is all about You

- You are not defined by your medical condition.
- You are empowered to learn, grow, and make informed choices.
- You are the most important member of your health care team.