

Nutrition Quarterly

Winter 2014/2015



NEW TREATMENTS FOR HEPATITIS C: PROS AND CONS

HEPATITIS C & HIV People living with HIV are at increased risk for viral hepatitis, and HIV accelerates hepatitis progression. About a quarter of HIV infected persons in the United States are also infected with Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), according to the CDC¹. HCV, a bloodborne virus, infects greater than 3 million Americans and is the leading cause of liver failure and liver cancer.

Most people with HCV don't know they have it. Even though symptoms may be silent or hidden, the virus can still damage the liver.

THE DILEMMA: INTERFERON OR WAIT? Conventional interferon treatments for Hepatitis C produce side effects so strong that many people forego medication while they wait for more tolerable treatment options. Side effects include cold and flu-like symptoms, nausea, diarrhea, anemia, extreme fatigue, weight loss, and depression³.

NEWER TREATMENTS: PROTEASE INHIBITORS Such as Simeprevir (Olysio), are used to treat HCV. They are taken in pill form, in combination with interferon and ribavirin.

NEWER TREATMENTS: OTHER DIRECT ACTING ANTIVIRALS Sofosbuvir, sold as Solvadi, was approved by the FDA in 2013. It is a once-a-day pill that, like interferon, should be taken in combination with ribavirin. Ledipasvir is a treatment that inhibits HCV when combined with Sofosbuvir. A Ledipasvir and Sofosbuvir combination pill, sold as Harvoni was approved by the FDA in 2014. Viekira Pak, another combination drug was also approved in 2014.

PRO'S OF NEWER TREATMENTS

- ◆ No injections
- ◆ Low rate of side effects observed
- ◆ Better outcomes observed in patients, especially sustained virologic response



CON'S OF NEWER TREATMENTS

- ◆ They can be very **costly**; however pharmaceutical companies have developed patient assistance programs to make the newer treatments more affordable.
- ◆ Patients and providers may not be up-to-date on all of the new options available to them.

Sources:

1. <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HCV/index.htm>
3. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds/a690006.html>

THE LIVER: FUN FACTS

***Where is it?** Upper right side of the abdomen, behind the ribs.

*It is the **largest and heaviest organ** in the body (weighs 3 lbs!).

*It is the only organ in the body that can **grow back** completely, even if over 50% of it is removed or damaged.

*The liver can perform over **500 tasks** including: clears harmful chemicals, makes bile to digest fats, and balances glucose, protein, fat, cholesterol, hormones, and vitamins in the body.



THE LIVER: FOOD & NUTRITION

Good nutrition is **vital** for a healthy liver. Eating a variety of healthy foods can help rebuild some damaged liver cells and form new, healthy cells.

People with HIV infection may have low levels of glutathione in the body. Glutathione is an amino acid that is an important part of the body's defense system, playing a role in both liver detoxification and immunity.

◆ **Foods rich in glutathione:** garlic, asparagus, and watermelon; papaya, avocado, and mushrooms also help produce glutathione.

Sulfur-containing foods help the liver move harmful chemicals out of the body.

◆ **Foods rich in sulfur:** broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, onions, and eggs.

Drinking water helps the kidneys flush out toxins that the liver has broken down.

◆ **Tips to stay hydrated:** sip water between meals, drink unsweetened tea and no added sugar juices, and eat plenty of fruits and vegetables.

The following may overload or harm the liver if eaten in excess. Try to **limit**:

◆ Alcohol (≤ 1 drink/day for women, 2 drinks/day for men); caffeine ($\leq 2-3$ cups/day); chemicals like colorings and preservatives; high-saturated fat meats (i.e. hot dogs, bacon) and full-fat dairy (i.e. ice cream, cheese); processed snacks and sweets.

VEGETABLE OF THE QUARTER:

CAULIFLOWER

Despite its white color, cauliflower is full of phytochemicals and antioxidants, nutrients that help prevent disease and promote a healthy body.

Cauliflower is a member of the cruciferous family of vegetables because the 4-petal flowers resemble a cross or “crucifer.” Other cruciferous vegetables include broccoli, broccoli rabe, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bok choy, collards, radishes, kale, arugula, turnips, and rutabaga.

Cauliflower is a good source of fiber, folate, and vitamin K, and is an excellent source of vitamin C.

Selection tips: Choose cauliflower with tight buds. Avoid brown spots or loose sections that are spread out. Looking for variety? Seek out colorful cauliflower—orange, purple, green, and the conical-shaped moss-green-colored Romanesco.

Storage tips: Store for up to a week in the refrigerator.

Preparation tips: You can cook cauliflower with the whole head intact. Or, cut a cauliflower into florets or thick slices, cut the head in half, cut away the leaves, cut out the tough stem, and chop!

Cooking tips: Steam cauliflower rather than boil it to preserve the most nutrients. Or, try sautéing or roasting cauliflower with some olive or canola oil (the oil will prevent the loss of the nutritious water-soluble vitamin C). Add your favorite herbs and spices to pump up the flavor!

Some other fun ways to cook with cauliflower:

-Puree steamed cauliflower with milk and seasonings to make mashed “potatoes”

-Toss chopped cauliflower into your favorite pasta dish (makes a nice addition to lasagna!)

-Make a cauliflower soup or add cauliflower to a coconut curry

-Make your own cauliflower “popcorn” by chopping cauliflower into small pieces and roasting it in the oven with a small drizzle of melted butter!



CAULIFLOWER “COUSCOUS” SALAD

Couscous is a small grain traditional to North African cuisine. Transform cauliflower into “couscous” by pulsing it into tiny pieces and lightly sautéing it. Toss with your favorite sweet and savory salad fixings!

Yield: 4-6 servings

- 1 head of cauliflower
- 2 tablespoons oil, olive or canola
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 large handful of spinach, chopped
- 1/4 cup (~1 small box) raisins
- 1/2 can garbanzo beans, drained
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice (and zest)

- 1) Break the cauliflower up into florets. Transfer the cauliflower to a food processor and pulse until it resembles small couscous-like pieces (you may need to do this in 2 batches). *You can also grate the cauliflower on a box grater, or chop by hand.
- 2) In a large sauté pan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the cauliflower couscous to the pan with the garlic and cook for about 7 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the chopped spinach to the pan, then remove the mixture from heat and let it cool slightly.
- 3) Stir in the raisins, beans, cumin, salt, and lemon juice and zest. Enjoy!

HERB OF THE QUARTER: LAVENDER

Common names: lavender, English lavender, garden lavender; **Latin name:** *Lavandula angustifolia*

The name lavender comes from the Latin root *lavare*, which means “to wash”². Historically, lavender was used in baths to help purify the body and spirit, and was also used as a remedy for insomnia, anxiety, depression, and fatigue. Lavender is thought to produce sedative effects when the scent is inhaled.

Available forms: aromatherapy oil, bath soaps, lotions, extracts, infusions, teas, tinctures, whole, dried flowers².

Some easy tips to start using lavender:

- * Check out Dr. Bronner’s brand for lavender-scented soaps
- * Steep some culinary lavender buds in hot water and a little honey for a relaxing tea
- * Purchase or make your own essential oil and inhale it or apply to the skin (*Always use diluted oil; lavender oil may be poisonous if ingested*³).

Remember: Tell all of your health care providers about any complementary health practices you use to help ensure coordinated and safe care¹.

1. <http://nccam.nih.gov/health/lavender/ataglance.htm>

2. <http://umm.edu/health/medical-reference-guide/complementary-and-alternative-medicine-guide/herb/lavender>

