

| | Hepatitis A | Hepatitis B | Hepatitis C | Hepatitis D | Hepatitis E |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|---|---|
| <i>Previous names</i> | Infectious hepatitis | Serum hepatitis | Non-A, non-B hepatitis | | |
| Epidemiology | | | | | |
| <i>Cause</i> | Hepatitis A virus (HAV) | Hepatitis B virus (HBV) | Hepatitis C virus (HCV) | Hepatitis D virus (HDV) | Hepatitis E virus (HEV) |
| <i>Mode of transmission</i> | Fecal–oral route; poor sanitation. Person-to-person contact. Waterborne; foodborne. Transmission possible with oral–anal contact during sex. | Parenterally; by intimate contact with carriers or those with acute disease; sexual and oral–oral contact. Perinatal transmission from mothers to infants. An important occupational hazard for health care personnel. | Transfusion of blood and blood products; exposure to contaminated blood through equipment or drug paraphernalia. Transmission possible with sex with infected partner; risk increased with STD. | Same as HBV. HBV surface antigen necessary for replication; pattern similar to that of hepatitis B. | Fecal–oral route; person to person contact may be possible, although risk appears low |
| <i>Incubation</i> | 15–50 days | 28–160 days | 15–160 days | 21–140 days | 15–65 days |
| <i>Immunity</i> | Average: 30 days Homologous | Average: 70–80 days Homologous | Average: 50 days Second attack may indicate weak immunity or infection with another agent. | Average: 35 days Homologous | Average: 42 days Unknown |
| Nature of Illness | | | | | |
| <i>Signs and symptoms</i> | May occur with or without symptoms; flulike illness <i>Preicteric phase:</i> Headache, malaise, fatigue, anorexia, fever <i>Icteric phase:</i> Dark urine, jaundice of sclera and skin, tender liver | May occur without symptoms May develop arthralgias, rash | Similar to HBV; less severe and anicteric | Similar to HBV | Similar to HAV. Very severe in pregnant women. |
| <i>Outcome</i> | Usually mild with recovery. Fatality rate: <1%. No carrier state or increased risk of chronic hepatitis, cirrhosis, or hepatic cancer. | May be severe. Fatality rate: 1–10%. Carrier state possible. Increased risk of chronic hepatitis, cirrhosis, and hepatic cancer. | Frequent occurrence of chronic carrier state and chronic liver disease. Increased risk of hepatic cancer. | Similar to HBV but greater likelihood of carrier state, chronic active hepatitis, and cirrhosis | Similar to HAV except very severe in pregnant women |