



## HEPATITIS C

Information, advice, testing,  
support & training service

### CIRRHOSIS

**Many things such as alcohol, drugs and diseases like Hepatitis C can cause scarring of the liver.**

The amazing thing about the liver is that it can repair itself even when it is infected by hepatitis C. But after a long time (usually 10-40 years) the liver can become so damaged that it can't heal itself completely.

Cirrhosis means that the liver has become so damaged and scarred that it just can't function very well.

There are two types of cirrhosis:

**Compensated** cirrhosis means that the liver has a lot of scarring but can still perform many important functions.

**Decompensated** cirrhosis means that the liver is so scarred that it can't perform many of the things that keep you healthy.

It is important to remember:

◆ If your liver develops **compensated** cirrhosis you may not even have any symptoms to make you aware that your liver is damaged. This is why it is so important to get good medical care to keep you healthy. This may include taking HCV medications to treat your hepatitis C.

◆ When you have **decompensated** cirrhosis the liver becomes so damaged you will develop many symptoms and warning signs.

When the liver becomes this damaged, you cannot take medications to treat Hepatitis C because the liver cannot cope. At this point, it is very important that you receive regular check-ups with your doctor to keep an eye on you more closely and to treat you for some of the symptoms.