

When A Curable Virus Turns Into Cancer



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People diagnosed with primary **liver cancer** have a median survival of **6 to 20 months**.¹ Only **20%** are alive after five years.²

A major cause of **liver cancer** is the **hepatitis C** virus.

Chronic **hepatitis C** also increases risk of non-Hodgkin's **lymphoma**, head and neck **cancers**,³ liver **cirrhosis**^{4,5} and liver **failure**.⁶

Yet this virus is now curable in **95%** of cases.⁷

This prompted the **U.S. Preventive Services Task Force** to urge at least one-time **blood screening** for all Americans aged 18-79 years.⁸

This recommendation was made because only half of those infected with **hepatitis C** know it and virtually all can be **cured**.

Ribavirin was long ago shown to improve response rates of **hepatitis C** patients treated with **alpha-interferon**.⁹ Newer drugs like Harvoni, Eplclusa, or Vosevi have dramatically **improved** the cure rate.^{10,11}

Few of you know about the **FDA's** delay in approving **ribavirin** and the horrific death toll this inflicted.

This article describes the battle **Life Extension** waged to force the **FDA** to approve **ribavirin**.

I then relay a **low-cost** way to ensure you do not silently harbor a curable **hepatitis C** virus.



About **2.4 million** people in the United States are estimated to have **hepatitis C**.¹² There were an estimated **57,500** new infections as of 2019.¹³

This virus causes chronic **inflammatory** damage that can result in **cirrhosis** and eventual **liver failure**. Without a transplant, liver failure is universally fatal.¹⁴

While the name of the virus is **hepatitis**, it does not stay *only* in the liver. It manifests in other parts of the body and induces other cancers beyond **primary liver cancer**.

Primary liver cancer differs from cancer cells that **metastasize** to the liver from other organs.

The medical term for the most common type of primary liver cancer is **hepatocellular carcinoma**.

Who Is Contracting Hepatitis C?

About **75%** of those infected with hepatitis C in the United States were born between **1945** and **1965**.^{15,16}

People in this age group have around **five times** greater risk of harboring the **hepatitis C** virus.¹⁶

While there are known **risk factors**, many have no identifiable reason that explains why they are infected. That's why **screening** for the **hepatitis C virus** is so important.

Hepatitis C Drug Therapies

For decades, hepatitis C patients endured a six-month treatment using **alpha-interferon**, which caused brutal side effects with no guarantee the virus would be eliminated.¹⁷

When the anti-viral drug **ribavirin** was added to **alpha-interferon**, cure rates markedly improved.¹⁷

The good news today is that several hepatitis C drugs are available that are relatively **non-toxic** and have cure rates **over 95%**.

In certain types of cases, co-administration of **ribavirin** is still used.

Importance of Early Detection

The **hepatitis C virus** inflicts damage to liver cells that often leads to cirrhosis and liver cancer.

It's a leading reason why more than **17,000** Americans are awaiting **liver transplants** today—and no one should think a liver transplant is easy.¹⁸

It is crucial for those infected with hepatitis C to eliminate the **virus** before irreversible liver damage occurs.



The scientific literature strongly supported **ribavirin** plus **interferon** as the best treatment for hepatitis C infections before **1998**.¹⁹

The FDA disregarded these studies because the FDA despised the company (ICN Pharmaceuticals) that made ribavirin. The company's sin was to "publicize" favorable results from ribavirin **clinical trials** showing remarkable efficacy.

The FDA hates when companies promote a drug before approval because it puts pressure on the FDA to approve it sooner.

The FDA would prefer to take their bureaucratic time in approving a new drug rather than capitulate to the pressure of dying Americans who might be cured by a therapy stuck in the FDA's waiting room.

The bureaucratic suppression of **ribavirin** provides a real-world example of what's wrong with today's medical regulatory system.

Clinical studies showed that when **ribavirin** plus **interferon-alpha** were combined, hepatitis C eradication occurred **50%-100% more** often than with **interferon-alpha** alone.²⁰⁻²³

The FDA preferred to punish the maker of **ribavirin** rather than save human lives.

Our Battle to Get Ribavirin Approved

Ribavirin is a broad-spectrum antiviral drug that was approved by virtually every country in the 1980s. It had been shown to significantly suppress hepatitis C infection when combined with **interferon-alpha**.^{22,23}

We at **Life Extension** recognized the efficacy of **ribavirin** in **1983** and fought a monumental battle to force the **FDA** to approve it.

I made national media appearances attacking the FDA for not approving ribavirin even though we had no financial stake in it. Our mission was to spare the tens of thousands of Americans who were dying because the FDA would not allow them access to ribavirin.

Even after the FDA approved ribavirin, it was indicated for hepatitis patients who were naïve to the interferon treatment or who had to fail a grueling **interferon** regimen *before* they could try combination **interferon + ribavirin**.²⁴

Today's System Needs Radical Reform

Science is discovering new therapies to treat killer diseases, but a labyrinth of needless bureaucracy denies Americans access to these lifesaving medicines.



The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is a bottleneck in a drug approval process that must be changed if we are to save our bodies from the ravages of **aging** and **degenerative illness**.

Ribavirin is one example of a lethal delay. It took us 12 years to get the FDA to approve this one drug.

In patients who failed interferon therapy, studies show that using the combination **ribavirin + interferon-alpha** was far more effective compared to treating hepatitis C with **interferon-alpha** alone.²⁴

Blood Tests Identify Reversible Cancer Risks

Most people have annual blood tests to check for cardiovascular risk factors like total **cholesterol**, **LDL**, and **triglycerides**.

What few realize is that other blood tests such as **fasting insulin**, **glucose**, and **C-reactive protein** can indicate one's future cancer risk.

Testing for **hepatitis C** is now highly recommended because it is over **95% curable**, but **liver cancer** caused by this **virus** is not.

Those who procrastinate having comprehensive blood tests miss out on opportunities to correct risk factors before symptomatic onset of irreversible degenerative illnesses.

Lab Test Super Sale

Since our founding over **40 years** ago, **Life Extension®** has urged its readers to have annual lab tests.

The numbers of lives saved by our recommendations are huge. This includes men diagnosed with *early-stage prostate cancer* who are readily cured with today's less side-effect-prone treatments.

The most popular **blood test** our supporters order each year is the comprehensive **Male** or **Female Panel**. We charge **\$299** for these tests that cost around **\$2,000** at commercial labs.

This represents an almost **90% savings**.

Just once a year, we discount the prices of our lab tests, enabling readers to obtain the **Male** or **Female Blood Test Panels** for only **\$224**.

This year we are advising most of our supporters to add a hepatitis C antibody test to ensure they are not infected with this **virus** that silently inflicts damage that can lead to **cancer** or **liver failure**.

The retail price of the hepatitis C test is \$50, but we discount it down to **\$34** during the **Lab Test Super Sale** that lasts until **July 11, 2022**.

For most people, just one hepatitis C antibody test is what they need to ensure they are not silently infected.

To order a **Male** and/or **Female Panel** and other tests at the year's lowest prices, call **1-800-208-3444** (24 hours) or log on to: www.LifeExtension.com/blood

You can view the tests included in the **Male** or **Female Panels** on the page to the right.

For longer life,



William Faloon, Co-Founder
Life Extension

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