

First approach to a patient with suspected hepatitis

RECOGNIZING THE CLINICAL PRESENTATION OF HEPATITIS

Hepatitis is an inflammatory process of the liver with many possible causes. When approaching a patient with suspected hepatitis, it is crucial to recognize the symptoms of hepatitis. We can distinguish acute from chronic symptoms.

Acute symptoms



- Abdominal pain
- Nausea
- Jaundice
- Fever
- Dark urine
- Pale stool

Chronic symptoms



- Asymptomatic
- Fatigue
- Weight loss
- Nausea
- Myalgia or arthralgia
- Signs of liver decompensation:
 - jaundice
 - splenomegaly
 - ascites
 - peripheral edema
 - encephalopathy



However, it is important to know that the exacerbation of chronic hepatitis may show symptoms of acute infection!

Further Reading

Kasper, DL, Fauci, AD, Hauser, SL, et al. 2015. *Harrison's principles of internal medicine*. 19th Edition. New York, New York: McGraw Hill Education.

Suriawinata, AA and Thung, SN. 2011. *Liver Pathology: An Atlas and Concise Guide*. 1st Edition. New York, New York: Demos Medical Publishing.