

## Patient Discharge Instructions-Cirrhosis

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### TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!

You need to understand how to manage your condition – this is important!

You can find information about this at [www.cirrhosiscare.ca](http://www.cirrhosiscare.ca). In addition to the symptoms listed below, you may experience other symptoms as you live with liver cirrhosis. These can include feelings of depression, anxiety, muscle cramps, pain, weight loss, itching and burning skin, difficulty sleeping, and others. Let your health team know if you're having any of these problems.

#### **Be Active!**

Physical activity helps you keep and build muscle. Ask your healthcare provider for advice and check out [www.cirrhosiscare.ca](http://www.cirrhosiscare.ca) for video examples of exercises you can do.



- Start walking at least 10 minutes a day, 3 to 4 days a week.
- Go for longer walks and walk more often. Build up walking every day and at least 150 minutes each week.
- Do resistance exercises and balance training 2 or 3 days each week.

#### **Eat healthy**

Healthy eating is important to help you manage weight, prevent other health problems, and keep your body strong.



- Eat the right amount of protein and calories that you need
- Eat every 3 to 4 hours during the day.
- Have a snack before bed and eat breakfast soon after you way up.
- If you have a build-up of fluid, don't have more than 2000mg of sodium each day.

#### **Alarm Symptoms: When to Call for Help**

Contact your healthcare provider right away or go to the nearest emergency department if you:



- Have trouble breathing
- Have a sharp pain in your belly that doesn't go away
- Have a fever (a temperature of 38°C or higher)
- Have a temperature between 37.5° and 37.9°C and you feel unwell
- Have nausea and vomiting
- Have severe confusion or sleepiness
- Can't speak, walk properly, or follow directions
- Are vomiting blood or something that looks like coffee grounds
- Have black or tar-like bowel movements

☑ **If you are being treated for fluid build-up (ascites, pleural effusion or edema):**

If you're being treated for a build-up of fluid, it's important to weigh yourself each morning. Weigh yourself before breakfast, before you drink anything or take medicine, and after you pee (urinate). Keep track of your weight each day in a notebook or app on your phone. Let your healthcare provider know if you:



- Lose 2 pounds (0.9 kg) or more in a day, for 2 days in a row
- Lose more than 7 pounds (3.2 kg) in a week.
- Gain 2 pounds (0.9 kg) or more in a day, for 2 days in a row
- Gain 5 pounds (2.3 kg) in a week.
- See more swelling in your belly, legs or feet.
- Have shortness of breath when you're active or lying down.

☑ **If you are on blood pressure medication to prevent bleeding from enlarged veins (varices):**

Check your blood pressure and pulse 2 to 3 times per week. Rest for at least five minutes before you check these measurements. Record your measurements in a notebook or app on your phone. Let your healthcare provider know if:



- Your pulse is less than 50 beats per minute.
- The first (or top) number of your blood pressure is lower than 90.
- You are dizzy, lightheaded or fall.

☑ **If you are being treated for forgetfulness or confusion (hepatic encephalopathy):**

Record the number of bowel movements you have each day in a notebook or app on your phone to show your healthcare provider. If you take Lactulose, adjust the amount you take so you have 2 to 3 medium to large, soft bowel movements a day. Don't take more than you need because it may make you dehydrated. But if you don't take enough, you may feel confused. Avoid medications that can make you sleepy. Let your healthcare provider know if you:



- Have trouble adjusting the dose of Lactulose to have 2 to 3 medium to large, soft bowel movements a day.
- Feel tired, sleep more, or your sleep patterns change so you're up at night and sleep during the day.
- Have trouble concentration or remembering things.
- Have a change in your personality.
- Notice shaking of your body (called a tremor) or are unsteady (feel like you may fall).



☑ **If you've been advised to avoid alcohol use:**

Ask your healthcare team for local resources to help you to do this.

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