

Hepatic Encephalopathy

Confusion



When to get medical attention:

Go to the nearest emergency department, or have someone call 911 if you:

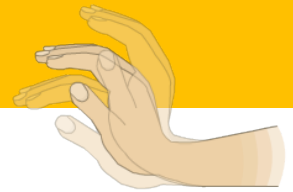
- have severe confusion or sleepiness
- can't speak, walk properly, or follow directions
- have a fever
- have severe nausea and vomiting

What is Hepatic Encephalopathy?

The damage to your liver from cirrhosis may cause toxins to build up in your bloodstream and brain causing hepatic encephalopathy. You may hear your healthcare team call it HE for short.

Symptoms:

- coma
- disorientation
- difficulty remembering the right words to say
- drowsiness
- hand "flapping"
- sleep pattern changes
- feeling irritable
- trouble concentrating
- poor short-term memory
- having tremors



Treatment:

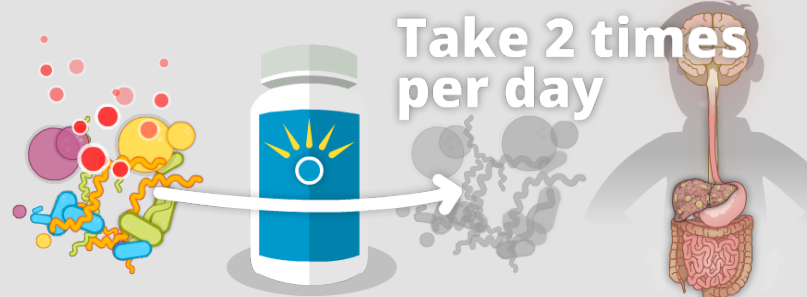
1. Lactulose

In most situations, encephalopathy is treated with a medicine called lactulose. Lactulose is a laxative syrup that is used to treat hepatic encephalopathy by helping your body get rid of toxins like ammonia.

If you are taking lactulose, you should take enough so that you are having 2 or 3 soft bowel movements each day. You should increase the amount you are taking if you are not having enough bowel movements.

2. Rifaximin (Zaxine, Xifaxan)

Another treatment for encephalopathy is rifaximin. Rifaximin is an antibiotic that stays in your digestive system and changes the bacteria in your gut so they make less toxins. Rifaximin comes as a pill, it is taken twice a day and should not be stopped unless it has been discontinued by your liver specialist



Have 2-3 Bowel Movements per day



Scan to view videos on:

HE & Medicines for hepatic encephalopathy