

## Hepatitis E

### Definition of hepatitis E

- Viral infection of hepatocytes

### Epidemiology of hepatitis E

- Prevalent in developing countries

### Causes of hepatitis E

- Faeco-oral spread is commonest
- Person-to-person spread is rare
- Animal reservoir – especially pigs

### Presentations of hepatitis E

- Mostly presents as an acute viral infection similar to Hepatitis A (see [Hep A](#))
- Can progress to chronic infection, especially in immunocompromised individuals (solid-organ transplant recipients are particularly at risk)

### Diagnosis of hepatitis E

- Serum HEV antibodies

### Initial management of hepatitis E

- Supportive treatment for acute infection
- Ribavirin +/- peg-interferon for chronic infection
- A vaccine has now been developed and is approved for use in China

### Complications of hepatitis E

- Chronic liver disease and its associated complications
- Pregnant women who contract HEV are at risk of acute fulminant liver failure

### Prognosis of hepatitis E

- Usually a self-limiting disease with a good prognosis
- However, it has an overall mortality of 2%
- Pregnant women who contract HEV have a mortality of 20%, especially if infected in the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester

## Common questions concerning hepatitis E

### How does Hepatitis E present?

- Mostly presents as an acute viral infection similar to Hepatitis A (see [Hep A](#))
- Can progress to chronic infection, especially in immunocompromised individuals (solid-organ transplant recipients are particularly at risk)

### What is the prognosis of Hepatitis E?

- Usually a self-limiting disease with a good prognosis
- However, it has an overall mortality of 2%
- Pregnant women who contract HEV have a mortality of 20%, especially if infected in the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester