Shelf Life

November 1, 2000 By Maia Szalavitz

The Hepatitis Report: A Critical Review of the Research and Treatment of Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) and Hepatitis & HIV Coinfection

By Michael Marco and Jeffrey Schouten, MD (Treatment Action Group/New York City, 212.971.9022). $10 in print or free online at *http://www.treatmentactiongroup.org/*

This report covers the three T's of hep C research -- testing, transmission and treatment, including for HIV/HCV coinfection -- up to the latest advances. Lay folks may find some techie sections tough going, but the chapter summaries and the section on current controversies and recommendations should be accessible to all. One major omission: the few promising studies of alternative treatments. A smaller beef: no info on ways to handle the depression and anxiety that the HCV treatment interferon can cause. Still, the TAG team hits another homerun for the knowledge-equals-power crowd.

A Guide on the Inside: Women Talking to Women About HIV
By the AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts
For a free copy, call 617.450.1432.

This 34-page pamphlet offers a clear, concise introduction to living with HIV in prison. Although written by and for women prisoners in Massachusetts, the info will be relevant to incarcerated women everywhere. The many thorny issues, if not the precise procedures for getting medical attention, are the same, and the quotations from female HIVers are sharp and well chosen. Especially helpful, given prisoners' limited options, is the booklet's focus on what women can do about treatment decisions, taking medications properly, dealing with side effects and deciding whether to disclose their status inside. A must-have for any woman fighting the virus behind bars.

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