

http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/your_body/medical_care/curable.html

What's the Difference Between a Treatment and a Cure?

My health teacher told me that hepatitis B has no cure, but your article states that it is treated. What's that all about?

- Dan*

The term "cure" means that, after medical treatment, the patient no longer has that particular condition anymore.

Some diseases can be cured. Others, like hepatitis B, have no cure. The person will always have the condition, but medical treatments can help to manage the disease.

Medical professionals use medication, therapy, surgery, and other treatments to help lessen the symptoms of a disease. Sometimes these treatments are cures – in other words, they get rid of the disease. For example, doctors treat athlete's foot using antifungal creams and sprays that kill the fungus causing the disease.

When a disease can't be cured, doctors often use treatments to help control or even eliminate its symptoms. For example, one type of diabetes occurs when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin to get glucose into cells where it can be stored or used as energy. Doctors treat people with diabetes using insulin injections and other methods so they can continue to live normal lives. But right now there's no cure for diabetes. So some people will need insulin treatments for the rest of their lives.

The good news is that researchers are constantly coming up with advances in medicine. So it's possible that a disease that can be treated but not cured today may be cured in the future.

This information was compiled by

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