

Dear family and friends,

A member of our family is impacted by a rare disease called autoimmune hepatitis (AIH). Here is some helpful information we'd like to share with you so you can better understand the disease and how it may affect us. This information is private.

What is autoimmune hepatitis (AIH)?

- NOT contagious
- A rare disease that causes the immune system to attack the liver
- A chronic and lifelong disease
- A disease with no cure
- A disease that takes many tests to diagnose (i.e., liver biopsy, blood work)
- An invisible illness: patients look fine but may feel awful

What are the most common symptoms and side effects?

- Extreme fatigue (can't be "fixed" with a nap)
- Abdominal pain or discomfort
- Nausea
- Feeling unwell
- Itching
- Joint pain
- Mental fog
- Physical changes, including weight gain and "moon face"

How will AIH affect the patient?

- May have frequent doctor appointments and important medical tests
- May be absent from parties or gatherings due to extreme fatigue or symptoms
- May attend social or family gatherings but may still feel extremely fatigued and not well
- May not be able to do everything or participate in all social events

What can you do to help?

- Show respect by talking or asking about it privately.
- Don't joke about it.
- Be supportive even if you don't see symptoms or side effects.
- Don't define the person with AIH by this rare disease.
- Don't make the person with AIH feel guilty or like they are a burden.
- Don't pity the person with AIH.
- Continue to invite the person with AIH to social events and gatherings even though they may decline based on symptoms they may be experiencing.

If you want to learn more about this disease, please check out the Autoimmune Hepatitis Association website: www.aihep.org

