

# MY NAME IS BILLY

Cirrhosis, Hepatitis C and Me

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## *A Child's Perspective*

### **Life as a 12 year-old with Hepatitis C**

By Billy M.

I am 12 years old and I have hepatitis C and cirrhosis. I think hepatitis and all of the shots stink. Having something that other kids around me don't have makes me feel special in a bad way and a good way at the same time.

I don't like telling people that I have it. I used to think I should keep it a secret but now I don't. Last year when I was on shots and missed a lot of school, some kids teased me and called me names. One time I couldn't play a sport because the coach thought I might hurt the other kids. That hurt me really bad.

I was on interferon shots three times a week for a year. I have a break right now and start again in April and take a pill with it. I don't see why they can't make it a lotion. The shots sting where I get them in my legs and I'm sore all the time. Then I get tired easily and get headaches and it's hard to wake up.

I block it out of my mind a lot because I don't want to think about it. I just try to act like I'm normal and I don't have it when I am playing and going to school. I have to push myself a lot harder than other kids because my legs hurt and I don't have the energy but I want to play so I do.

When I'm tired, I like to play video games, draw, and pet my cats. Last year the kids at school had to get a vaccination shot and they were all upset and I feel like they are so lucky because of all the shots I have to get.

