Appendix 1: Laboratory investigations during and after hepatitis C antiviral therapy

Test	Comments
During therapy	
Complete blood count every 2 wk for 2 mo, then every month until the end of the treatment course	Neutrophil count < 0.75×10^9/L: reduce interferon dose Neutrophil count < 0.5×10^9/L: STOP interferon Platelet count < 50×10^9/L: reduce interferon dose Platelet count < 25×10^9/L: STOP interferon Hemoglobin level < 100 g/L: reduce ribavirin dose plus consider erythropoietin. Hemoglobin level < 85 g/L: STOP interferon–ribavirin Also discontinue ribavirin in a patient with a history of cardiovascular disease and a > 20 g/L drop over 1 mo; in a patient with stable cardiovascular disease and a > 20 g/L drop over 1 mo, reduce interferon–ribavirin dose (if the hemoglobin level still < 100 g/L after 4 wk of dose reduction, then STOP interferon–ribavirin) Creatinine level > 2 × upper limit of normal: STOP interferon–ribavirin If the patient becomes hypo- or hyperthyroid, thyroid therapy needs to be started to maintain a euthyroid state
Alanine transferase, bilirubin and glucose levels every month until the end of the treatment course	Alanine transferase level > 10 × upper limit of normal: STOP interferon–ribavirin
Thyroid-stimulating hormone level every 6 mo during treatment and again at 6 mo after the end of treatment	—
Pregnancy test every month when appropriate	—
After therapy	
Qualitative HCV RNA PCR assay at the end of treatment course	—
Qualitative HCV RNA PCR assay 6 mo after the end of treatment course	—
Thyroid-stimulating hormone level at 6 mo after the end of treatment	—
Pregnancy test every month when appropriate for 6 mo after treatment	—