

Hepatitis C Fact Sheet

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	80% of persons have no signs or symptoms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • jaundice • fatigue • dark urine • abdominal pain • loss of appetite • nausea, vomiting 																					
CAUSE	Hepatitis C virus (HCV)																					
LONG-TERM EFFECTS WITHOUT VACCINATION	Chronic infection occurs in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic infection: 55%-85% of infected persons • Chronic liver disease: 70% of chronically infected persons • Deaths from chronic liver disease: 1%-5% of infected persons may die • Leading indication for liver transplant 																					
TRANSMISSION Recommendation s for testing based on risk for HCV infection	<p>Occurs when blood or body fluids from an infected person enters the body of a person who is not infected.</p> <p>HCV is spread through sharing needles or "works" when "shooting" drugs, through needlesticks or sharps exposures on the job, or from an infected mother to her baby during birth.</p> <p>Persons at risk for HCV infection might also be at risk for infection with hepatitis B virus (HBV) or HIV.</p> <p>Recommendations for Testing Based on Risk for HCV Infection</p> <p>After 12-18 mos. Old</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="603 1541 1359 2069"> <thead> <tr> <th>PERSONS</th> <th>RISK OF INFECTION</th> <th>TESTING RECOMMENDED?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Injecting drug users</td> <td>High</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recipients of clotting factors made before 1987</td> <td>High</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hemodialysis patients</td> <td>Intermediate</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recipients of blood and/or solid organs before 1992</td> <td>Intermediate</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>People with undiagnosed liver problems</td> <td>Intermediate</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Infants born to infected mothers</td> <td>Intermediate</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	PERSONS	RISK OF INFECTION	TESTING RECOMMENDED?	Injecting drug users	High	Yes	Recipients of clotting factors made before 1987	High	Yes	Hemodialysis patients	Intermediate	Yes	Recipients of blood and/or solid organs before 1992	Intermediate	Yes	People with undiagnosed liver problems	Intermediate	Yes	Infants born to infected mothers	Intermediate	
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	Healthcare/public safety workers People having sex with multiple partners People having sex with an infected steady partner	Low Low Low	Only after known exposure No* No*
PREVENTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no vaccine to prevent hepatitis C. • Do not shoot drugs; if you shoot drugs, stop and get into a treatment program; if you can't stop, never share needles, syringes, water, or "works", and get vaccinated against hepatitis A & B. • Do not share personal care items that might have blood on them (razors, toothbrushes). • If you are a health care or public safety worker, always follow routine barrier precautions and safely handle needles and other sharps; get vaccinated against hepatitis B. • Consider the risks if you are thinking about getting a tattoo or body piercing. You might get infected if the tools have someone else's blood on them or if the artist or piercer does not follow good health practices. • HCV can be spread by sex, but this is rare. If you are having sex with more than one steady sex partner, use latex condoms* correctly and every time to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. You should also get vaccinated against hepatitis B. • If you are HCV positive, do not donate blood, organs, or tissue. 		
TREATMENT & MEDICAL MANAGEMENT <u>AASLD Practice Guideline: Diagnosis, Management, and Treatment of Hepatitis C</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCV positive persons should be evaluated by their doctor for liver disease. • Interferon and ribavirin are two drugs licensed for the treatment of persons with chronic hepatitis C. • Interferon can be taken alone or in combination with ribavirin. Combination therapy, using pegylated interferon and ribavirin, is currently the treatment of choice. • Combination therapy can get rid of the virus in up to 5 out of 10 persons for genotype 1 and in up to 8 out of 10 persons for genotype 2 and 3. • Drinking alcohol can make your liver disease worse. 		
TRENDS & STATISTICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new infections per year has declined from an average of 240,000 in the 1980s to 		

	<p>about 30,000 in 2003.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most infections are due to illegal injection drug use.• Transfusion-associated cases occurred prior to blood donor screening; now occurs in less than one per million transfused unit of blood.• Estimated 3.9 million (1.8%) Americans have been infected with HCV, of whom 2.7 million are chronically infected.
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References

1. Hepatitis C information reproduced from the [Viral Hepatitis C Fact Sheet](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis/c/fact.htm). Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis/c/fact.htm> for more information.