

HCV Testing

According to the Center's for Disease Control (CDC):

Talk to your doctor about being tested for Hepatitis C if any of the following are true:

- You were born from 1945 through 1965
- You are a current or former injection drug user, even if you injected only one time or many years ago.
- You were treated for a blood clotting problem before 1987.
- You received a blood transfusion or organ transplant before July 1992.
- You are on long-term hemodialysis treatment.
- You have abnormal liver tests or liver disease.
- You work in health care or public safety and were exposed to blood through a needle stick or other sharp object injury.
- You are infected with HIV.

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HIV Capacity Building Initiative

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Hepatitis C (HCV)

Be Tested Today



What you need to know to protect yourself...

What is HCV?

Hepatitis C is a contagious liver disease that ranges in severity from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious, lifelong illness that attacks the liver. It results from infection with the Hepatitis C virus (HCV), which is spread primarily through contact with the blood of an infected person. Hepatitis C can be either “acute” or “chronic”.

Acute Hepatitis C virus infection is a short-term illness that occurs within the first 6 months after someone is exposed to the Hepatitis C virus. For most people, acute infection leads to chronic infection.

Chronic Hepatitis C virus infection is a long-term illness that occurs when the Hepatitis C virus remains in a person’s body. Hepatitis C virus infection can last a lifetime and lead to serious liver problems, including cirrhosis (scarring of the liver) or liver cancer.

How do you get HCV?

Hepatitis C is usually spread when blood from a person infected with the Hepatitis C virus enters the body of someone who is not infected. Today, most people become infected with the Hepatitis C virus by sharing needles or other equipment to inject drugs. Before 1992, when widespread screening of the blood supply began in the United States, Hepatitis C was also commonly spread through blood transfusions and organ transplants.

People can become infected with the Hepatitis C virus during such activities as:

- ⇒ Sharing needles, syringes, or other equipment to inject drugs
 - ⇒ Needle stick injuries in health care settings
 - ⇒ Being born to a mother who has Hepatitis C
 - ⇒ Less commonly, a person can also get Hepatitis C virus infection through
 - ⇒ Sharing personal care items that may have come in contact with another person’s blood, such as razors or toothbrushes
 - ⇒ Having sexual contact with a person infected with the Hepatitis C virus
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Symptoms

Approximately 70%–80% of people with acute Hepatitis C do not have any symptoms. Some people, however, can have mild to severe symptoms soon after being infected, including:

- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Fatigue
- ◆ Loss of appetite
- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Abdominal pain
- ◆ Dark urine
- ◆ Clay-colored bowel movements
- ◆ Joint pain
- ◆ Jaundice (yellow color in the skin or eyes)

