

Hepatitis C Facts



The Basics

What Is Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C (HCV) is a viral disease that affects your liver and can cause chronic liver disease. Almost four million people in the U.S. have been infected with Hepatitis C.

What Are The Symptoms?

The symptoms of Hepatitis C are usually very mild. In fact, 3 out of 4 persons who are infected with Hepatitis C have no symptoms and can infect others without knowing it. It can take many years from the time a person is infected with the virus before symptoms occur, like extreme fatigue, cirrhosis of the liver, liver cancer, or liver failure.

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Infection Facts

How Could I Get Infected With Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is mainly spread through blood. This might happen by:

- Receiving blood transfusion, organ transplants or blood products before donor screening procedures were in place (1987).
- Using IV drugs, sharing needles and syringes.
- Receiving long-term kidney dialysis.
- Working in jobs where you are exposed to blood, such as healthcare, EMS or body art studio.
- Unclean needles used in tattoo or body piercing.

What Are Some Ways I CANNOT Get Hepatitis C?

You cannot get Hepatitis C from someone else by:

- Sneezing or coughing
- Hugging
- Touching or shaking hands
- Kissing
- Sharing eating utensils or drinking glasses
- Hepatitis C is not spread in food or water

More Information

Columbus Public Health

(614) 645-1474 / www.publichealth.columbus.gov

The American Liver Foundation

800-465-4837 / www.liverfoundation.org

The Hepatitis Foundation International

800-891-0707 / www.hepfi.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Hepatitis C Branch

888-443-7232 / <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis>

The Hepatitis C Support Project

www.HCVadvocate.org

Help-4-Hep - 877-435-7443 / <http://help4hep.org/>

Testing Positive For Hepatitis C

You Need A Doctor's Care

- Hepatitis C is a serious liver disease that should be followed by a doctor, even if you feel well.
- If you have tested positive for Hepatitis C, contact a doctor to treat you.

You May Be Putting Others At Risk

- Hepatitis C can be given to others through contact with an infected person's body fluids, such as through having sex, sharing toothbrushes, razors, or needles.
- If you have tested positive for Hepatitis C, please contact those people that you feel may be at risk for any of these reasons.

You Can Help Protect Others

If you have Hepatitis C, you can protect others from getting it by following these common sense rules:

- Do not share personal hygiene items that could have blood on them such as toothbrushes or razors.
- Wear a condom during sex.
- Clean up blood spills with diluted household bleach (1/2 cup bleach to 2 1/2 cups water).
- Cover open cuts with Band-Aids.
- Do not donate blood, organs, or body tissue.
- Do not share drug needles or cocaine "straws" with anyone.

You May Want To Ask Questions

If you wish to talk about having Hepatitis C, please call Columbus Public Health at (614) 645-1474.

**Out of 100 adults
infected with Hepatitis C...**

75-80 develop chronic Hepatitis C


60-70 develop chronic liver disease

5-20 develop cirrhosis

1-5 die from liver disease or cancer

**If you've tested positive for Hepatitis C or
think you are at risk, seek care right away to
help prevent these complications.**

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 **THE CITY OF
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