

Hepatitis C

What is it?

- Hepatitis C is an infection of the liver that is caused by a virus.
- The virus is found in the blood of persons who are infected with the disease.
- Symptoms include:
 - tiredness
 - nausea
 - abdominal pain
 - lighter stools
 - darker urine
 - jaundice – yellowing of the skin and eyes
- Most people who are infected with Hepatitis C do not get sick and have no symptoms.

How is it spread?

Hepatitis C is spread from contact with the body fluids of an infected person.

It can be spread by:

- sharing needles, straws, pipes, spoons and other drug-related equipment.
- getting a tattoo, body piercing or acupuncture when unsterilized equipment or poor technique is used.
- being born to a mother with Hepatitis C.
- getting pierced by a needle or sharp object that has infected blood on it.
- having unprotected sex with an infected partner (having many sex partners increases the risk of contact with Hepatitis C)
- sharing personal household items such as toothbrushes, dental floss, razors, nail files or other items which could have tiny amounts of infected blood on them

Is there treatment for it?

- There are a few medications available for treatment. Talk with your doctor regarding what treatment is the best for you.

How to take care of your liver if you have Hepatitis C

- See your doctor regularly.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- Tell your doctor about all medications you are taking, even over-the-counter and herbal medicines.

What can be done to prevent the spread of it?

- There is no vaccine for Hepatitis C. Persons at risk for Hepatitis C may also be at risk for infection with Hepatitis B. The vaccine for Hepatitis B is recommended.
- Avoid contact with other people's blood and body fluids.
- Practice safe sex. Use a condom.
- Do not share needles, syringes, or other needle equipment.
- Have only a professional do your tattoo, or body and ear piercing. Never share any equipment used for tattoo.
- Do not share personal care items such as razors, dental floss or toothbrushes.

**If you have Hepatitis C do not donate
your blood, body organs, other tissues or sperm.**

For more information visit:

Public Health Agency of Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/hepatitis-c.html>

Adherence to Infection Prevention and Control measures by staff and visitors is required to prevent the spread of infection.

**Stop the spread of germs and infection.
Clean your hands.**



This fact sheet provides basic general information only and is to be used as a quick guide, not as a complete resource on the subject. If you have any further questions, ask Infection Prevention & Control or your health care provider.