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# ALL ABOUT HEPATITIS C





## WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

**HEPATITIS C IS A VIRUS SPREAD THROUGH BLOOD THAT CAN CAUSE LIVER DISEASE.** It can potentially cause liver cirrhosis and primary liver cancer.

## HOW IS HEPATITIS C TRANSMITTED?

**TRANSMISSION OCCURS WHEN THE BLOOD OF SOMEONE WHO IS ALREADY INFECTED WITH HEPATITIS C** enters the blood stream of another person.

## METHODS OF HEPATITIS C TRANSMISSION



### SHARING NEEDLES

(drug injection, tattoo drawing, piercing)



### SHARING RAZORS, NAIL CLIPPERS, AND TOOTHBRUSHES

contaminated with blood



### DRAWING FROM THE SAME COOKER OR SPOON,

even if you do not share needles.



### TRANSMISSION FROM INFECTED MOTHER TO HER FETUS

(pregnancy, delivery, breastfeeding)



### SHARING SNORTING

**EQUIPMENT** such as straws and rolled up money.



### BLOOD TRANSFUSION OR DIALYSIS

before 1992



### UNPROTECTED SEX

with an infected person.





## HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST INFECTION

### IF YOU ARE STILL NOT READY TO STOP INJECTING:

DO NOT DRAW FROM THE SAME COOKER OR SPOON AND DO NOT SHARE OR RE-USE YOUR EQUIPMENT (needles/syringes, straws, or rolled up money)



- 1 USE NEW AND STERILE EQUIPMENT.**
- 2 GET REGULARLY TESTED. YOU CAN DO SO AT SKOUN.**

If you are a drug user, you must get tested often. Early detection is the key for treatment.

## REMEMBER!



HEPATITIS C VIRUS (HCV) CAN STAY ALIVE FOR OVER A WEEK OUTSIDE THE BODY IN BLOOD EXPOSED TO AIR. THAT IS WHY SHARING NEEDLES, COOKERS, SPOONS, STRAWS, ROLLED UP MONEY, RAZORS, CLIPPERS, TOOTHBRUSHES, AND COTTON SWABS CAN PUT YOU AT RISK OF CONTRACTING HCV.

## THERE ARE OTHER WAYS OF GETTING INFECTED WITH HEPATITIS C. TO PROTECT YOURSELF PROPERLY:

- **USE A CONDOM CORRECTLY** throughout the entire sexual encounter regardless of the type of sexual activity (oral, vaginal, or anal).
- **IF YOU ARE GETTING A PIERCING OR TATTOO**, make sure the needle is new, sealed, and sterilized and ink equipment is sterilized as well.
- **DON'T SHARE TOOTHBRUSHES, NAIL CLIPPERS OR RAZORS.** Hepatitis C can be transmitted through sores on a person's mouth or cuts on the skin.

## HEPATITIS C IS NOT SPREAD THROUGH





## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF HEPATITIS C?

**WITH HEPATITIS C, THE LIVER BECOMES DAMAGED AND BEGINS LOSING ITS ABILITY TO FUNCTION.** People with hepatitis C often get symptoms similar to those caused by Hepatitis A, B and D which makes it easy for a person who has it to confuse it with another illness.

**THE INCUBATION PERIOD FOR HEPATITIS C VARIES.** The incubation period refers to the time between contracting the virus and the time it takes for the symptoms of the virus to first appear.

**Symptoms of Hepatitis C include:**

- Yellowing of the skin and eyes, known as jaundice.
- Fever.
- Nausea, vomiting, and lack of appetite.
- Abdominal pain (on the upper right side).
- Light-colored feces.
- Dark-colored urine.



### REMEMBER!

PEOPLE WITH HEPATITIS C INFECTION MAY NOT SHOW SYMPTOMS RIGHT AWAY, BUT CAN DEVELOP SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEMS FROM THE INFECTION MANY YEARS LATER SUCH AS LIVER DAMAGE OR CANCER.

## HOW IS HEPATITIS C DIAGNOSED?

**A BLOOD TEST IS USUALLY NEEDED TO DETERMINE IF A PERSON HAS HEPATITIS C.**

## IS TREATMENT AVAILABLE?

**TREATMENT FOR HEPATITIS C IS AVAILABLE AND HAS A SUCCESS RATE THAT EXCEEDS 50%.**

**20%** of infected persons are spontaneously cured.

**20%** evolve towards liver cirrhosis.

**5%** of those with cirrhosis eventually suffer liver cancer.



### REMEMBER!

THERE ARE NO VACCINES AVAILABLE TO PROTECT PEOPLE AGAINST HEPATITIS C.

**IF YOU HAVE HEPATITIS C (OR HAVE DOUBTS) CONSULT SKOUN OR YOUR DOCTOR OR CALL HÉPATTITUDE POSITIVE ON 03-850 254 FOR HELP. REMEMBER, THE SOONER THE TREATMENT IS STARTED, THE HIGHER THE CHANCES OF LIVING A LONGER AND HEALTHIER LIFE.**

