



Central Michigan District Health Department
“Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities”

For more information, call your local CMDHD branch office:

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www.cmdhd.org

Hepatitis C

What is Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is a viral infection of the liver which can lead to cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver, liver failure, and is probably a major cause of liver cancer worldwide. Hepatitis C is caused by the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). Many infected with HCV have no symptoms until late in the illness but are still able to transmit the virus to others. A person can find out if they have Hepatitis C by seeing a doctor and getting a blood test done.

How is it spread?

Hepatitis C is spread through contact with HCV infected blood or by having sex with an infected person. Less commonly, it is passed on through household contact. People who receive blood products, dialysis, or who inject illegal drugs are most likely to get this disease.

What are the risk factors of Hepatitis C?

- Contaminated tattooing and body piercing needles
- Sharing needles during intravenous drug use
- Being employed at a facility that exposes you to human blood
- Being a hemodialysis patient
- Having ever received a blood transfusion before June 1990
- Having multiple sex partners
- Living with a person who has Hepatitis C

What are the symptoms of Hepatitis C?

- Yellowing of the eyes and skin
- Vomiting and nausea
- Fever
- Loss of appetite or stomach pain
- Stabbing pains in the liver region
- Extreme fatigue
- Dark urine

If you have Hepatitis C?

- See your doctor
- Don't donate blood, plasma, sperm, body organs, or other tissue
- Don't share razors, toothbrushes, needles, or other items that could be contaminated with blood
- Make sure to cover up open sores or other breaks on the surface of your skin
- Get vaccinated for Hepatitis A and B

No evidence supports the transmission of Hepatitis C by coughing, sneezing, hugging, or other casual contact. Hepatitis C cannot be spread by food or water.