



Central Michigan District Health Department

Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities



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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local Media Outlets
From: Central Michigan District Health Department
RE: CMDHD Recognizes World Hepatitis Day 2023
Release Date: July 18, 2023

World Hepatitis Day is July 28, 2023.

Routine screening for hepatitis C and vaccination for hepatitis A and B will decrease chance of illness.

Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) and the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA) are recognizing World Hepatitis Day (WHD), which raises awareness about viral hepatitis and the steps people can take to prevent and manage this disease. **CMDHD offers vaccines for hepatitis A and B and free hepatitis C screening and testing, including rapid antibody hepatitis C testing.** For more information or help with scheduling a visit, call CMDHD's Health Promotion department at 989-314-7570. Michigan's Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) offers low-cost hepatitis C treatment through their ["We Treat Hep C" program](#).

"The COVID-19 pandemic has slowed global efforts to fight hepatitis," said Steve Hall, CMDHD Health Officer. "This makes it even more important to know your status. Get tested for hepatitis to protect yourself and your family. If you are positive, the sooner you start treatment the better."

There are at least five types of hepatitis. The three most common in the United States are hepatitis A, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Hepatitis A is easily transmitted from person to person. It causes an acute infection that usually improves without treatment. Hepatitis B and hepatitis C can be spread through sex or sharing needles. They can cause a chronic infection, which can lead to liver disease. There is a vaccine to prevent hepatitis A and B. There is not one for hepatitis C. Viral hepatitis is a global public health threat. About 290 million people worldwide are living with chronic hepatitis B or C.

According to the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), hepatitis is a group of viral infections that lead to a range of health problems, such as liver cirrhosis, liver cancer, and liver failure. More than 1.4 million deaths per year are caused by hepatitis B and C alone. WHO has set a goal of ending viral hepatitis as a public health threat

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by 2030. Reaching this goal requires increased awareness, prevention, testing, and treatment. Some of the key steps people can take to prevent hepatitis are getting vaccinated, practicing safe sex, and avoiding sharing needles or other drug paraphernalia.

CMDHD offers free syringe services through Exchange Central, their Syringe Service Program. Through Exchange Central, people can access free HIV and hepatitis C testing, resources and referrals for substance use disorder, training in overdose prevention with Narcan, basic wound care supplies and other sterile equipment, to help decrease the spread of infections like HIV and hepatitis C. [Exchange Central's Mobile Unit](#) offers free hepatitis C testing, HIV testing, and syringe service supplies.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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