

<b>HCV ~ Quick Facts</b>	
<b>Causative agent</b>	Small, single-stranded enveloped RNA virus in flavivirus family
<b>Signs and symptoms</b>	Typically asymptomatic, but may present with fever, headache, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, dark urine, grey-colored stools, joint pain, and jaundice
<b>Transmission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percutaneous exposure to infected blood is the most efficient mode of HCV transmission</li> <li>• Mucous membrane exposures to blood also can result in transmission, although this route is less efficient</li> <li>• HCV can be detected in saliva, semen, breast milk, and other body fluids; these body fluids are not believed to be efficient vehicles of transmission</li> <li>• Perinatal transmission is an important route of transmission</li> </ul>
<b>Infectious Period (time from exposure to symptoms)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As soon as 1-2 weeks after exposure, although most people do not experience symptoms</li> <li>• Individuals who are HCV RNA positive are considered infectious</li> </ul>
<b>Incubation period (time from exposure to symptoms)</b>	2-12 weeks
<b>Laboratory Diagnosis</b>	HCV RNA appears in the blood 1-2 weeks after exposure, and HCV antibodies can be detected 4-10 weeks after exposure and as late as 6 months after exposure
<a href="#"><u>Screening</u></a>	<p><b>Universal hepatitis C screening:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hepatitis C screening at least once in a lifetime for <b>all adults</b> aged 18 years and older, except in settings where the prevalence of HCV infection (HCV RNA-positivity) is less than 0.1%</li> <li>• Hepatitis C screening for <b>all pregnant women during each pregnancy</b>, except in settings where the prevalence of HCV infection (HCV RNA-positivity) is less than 0.1%</li> </ul> <p><b>One-time hepatitis C testing regardless of age or setting prevalence among people with recognized conditions or exposures:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with HIV</li> <li>• People who ever injected drugs and shared needles, syringes, or other drug preparation equipment, including those who injected once or a few times many years ago</li> <li>• People with selected medical conditions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ people who ever received maintenance hemodialysis</li> <li>○ people with persistently abnormal ALT levels</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Prior recipients of transfusions or organ transplants, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ people who received clotting factor concentrates produced before 1987</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ people who received a transfusion of blood or blood components before July 1992</li> <li>○ people who received an organ transplant before July 1992</li> <li>○ people who were notified that they received blood from a donor who later tested positive for HCV infection</li> <li>• <a href="#">Health care, emergency medical, and public safety personnel after needle sticks, sharps, or mucosal exposures to HCV-positive blood</a> pdf icon[PDF – 177 KB]</li> <li>• Children born to mothers with HCV infection</li> </ul> <p><b>Routine periodic testing for people with ongoing risk factors, while risk factors persist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who currently inject drugs and share needles, syringes, or other drug preparation equipment</li> <li>• People with selected medical conditions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ people who ever received maintenance hemodialysis</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Any person who requests hepatitis C testing should receive it, regardless of disclosure of risk, because many persons may be reluctant to disclose stigmatizing risks</b></p>
<b>Prevention</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Harm reduction measures (use of clean needles, syringes, rinse water) to minimize the risk of spread through injection drug use</li> <li>2) Strict adherence to standard precautions and other infection control practices in healthcare settings</li> <li>3) Use of condoms can prevent the minimal risk of sexual transmission</li> <li>4) Not sharing personal items that might have blood on them, such as toothbrushes, dental appliances, razors, nail clippers, glucose meters, and lancet devices</li> <li>5) Getting <a href="#">vaccinated</a> against viral hepatitis A and B can reduce the likelihood of further liver damage.</li> </ol>
<b>Treatment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although initial regimens were often ineffective and carried a high risk of serious adverse events, Directly Acting Antivirals (<a href="#">DAAs</a>) are better tolerated and have much improved effectiveness</li> <li>• Approximately 90% of HCV-infected persons can be cured of infection with 8–12 weeks of therapy, regardless of genotype, prior treatment experience, fibrosis level, or presence of cirrhosis</li> </ul>