

# HIVAlliance

## Hepatitis C 101

“Supporting individuals living with HIV/AIDS and preventing new infections”

541-342-5088

[www.hivalliance.org](http://www.hivalliance.org)



# What is Hepatitis?

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- ❖ Hepatitis, in general, literally means inflammation of the liver
- ❖ Consider its parts:
  - ❖ **HEPA** (meaning—liver)
  - ❖ **ITIS** (meaning—inflammation)

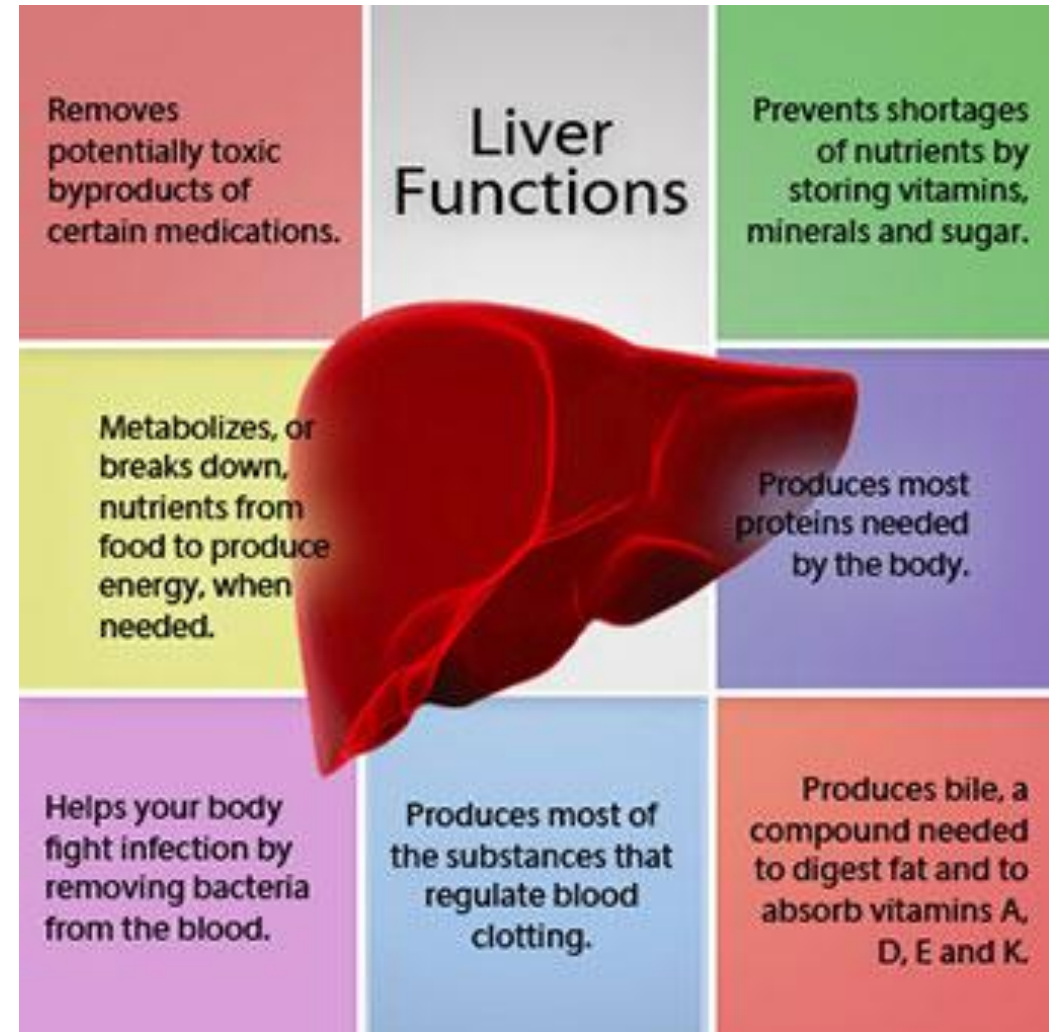


The liver is a powerful filter for our bodies! Without it we could not live!

- ❖ Reasons a person gets hepatitis:
  - ❖ Toxic damage (i.e. alcohol, drugs/medication, poisons/chemicals)
  - ❖ Immunologic damage (damage to immune system, like HIV)
  - ❖ Infections (i.e. viruses (HCV), bacteria, fungi, protozoa)

# Hepatitis & Your Liver

- ❖ Your liver is a vital organ; you cannot live without a liver
- ❖ The liver is involved in over 500 bodily functions; especially **filtering**.
- ❖ The liver is a non-complaining organ.
- ❖ The liver can regenerate; grow back if cut or spliced!



## PROGRESSION OF LIVER DAMAGE

HEALTHY LIVER



FIBROTIC LIVER



CIRRHOTIC LIVER



LIVER CANCER



A healthy liver is able to perform its normal functions effectively, e.g. aiding digestion and breaking down harmful drugs and poisons.

Continuous inflammation of the liver caused by hepatitis C can lead to fibrosis – the formation of scar tissue within the liver.

Extensive scarring can block the flow of blood through the liver and cause liver function to deteriorate over time - this is called cirrhosis.

Hepatitis C is a leading cause of liver cancer – the formation of a malignant tumour in the liver.

# Hepatitis Symptoms - General

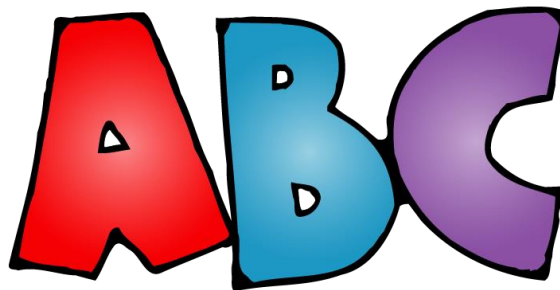
- Sometimes there are no symptoms
- Other times it feels like the flu
  - Loss of appetite
  - Tiredness
  - Mild fever
  - Muscle or joint aches
  - Nausea & vomiting
  - Abdominal pain
  - Jaundice



# Different Types of Hepatitis: Intro

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- ❖ There are five main types of hepatitis virus
  - ❖ Common ones are: A, B, C, D, and E
- ❖ All are human-only viruses
  - ❖ You cannot get them from nor give them to animals
- ❖ They are **distinctly different viruses**
  - ❖ You can't get one from the other AND
  - ❖ They don't turn into each other



# Different Types of Hepatitis

## ❖ Hepatitis A & E (HAV)

- ❖ Transmitted from feces to mouth
- ❖ Concerned about transmission via restaurants
- ❖ There is a vaccine for A (not E)



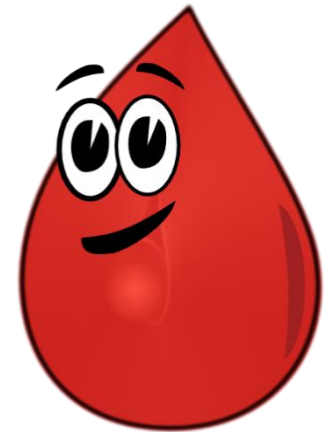
## ❖ Hepatitis B & D\* (HBV)

- ❖ Transmitted through sex or blood
- ❖ There is a vaccine for B (not D)



## ❖ Hepatitis C (HCV)

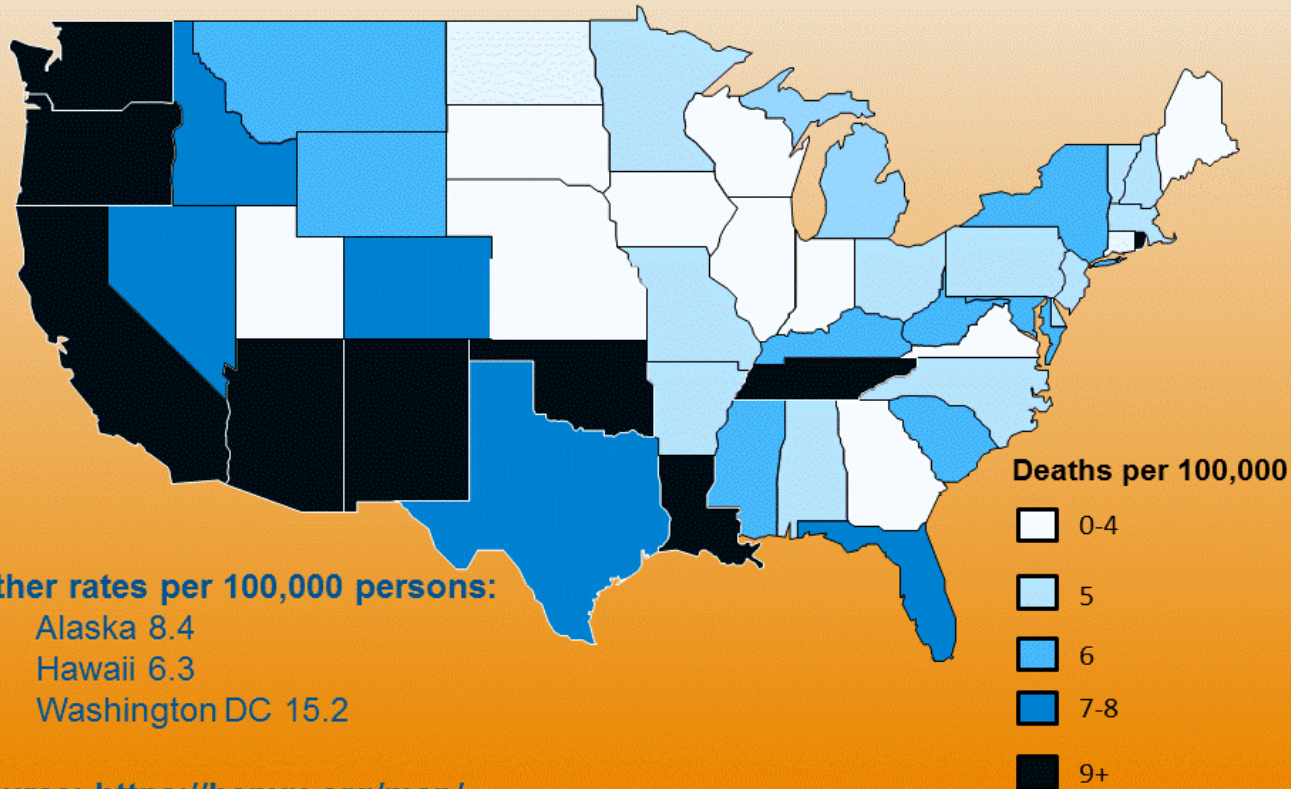
- ❖ Transmitted only through blood-to-blood contact
- ❖ Yet to have vaccine for this
- ❖ But there is a cure!



\*Hepatitis D is considered an “incomplete virus”

# Oregon is #1 for HCV Related Deaths

Rates of death related to hepatitis C  
per 100,000 population, 2014



Source: <https://hepvu.org/map/>

- ❖ It's estimated about 90,500 Oregonians have been infected with the virus and more than 500 die every year
- ❖ The problem was made worse by opioid use disorder, which led to a 20% rise in new infections from 2015 to 2016



# HCV Transmission

- ❖ Sharing injection drug equipment
- ❖ Tattooing, or piercing
- ❖ Sexual contact (where blood is present)
- ❖ Occupational hazard (razors, clippers, toothbrushes)
- ❖ During birth, mother to baby
  - ❖ Transmission occurs at time of birth; risks is **1 in 25**
- ❖ Exposure to blood
  - ❖ Transfusion or organ transplant, before 1992
  - ❖ Clotting factor medication, prior to 1988



# Hepatitis C (HCV)

- ❖ HCV was officially identified in 1989
- ❖ There are 6 different genotypes of HCV;
  - ❖ **75%** of people with HCV have Genotype 1 → the hardest one to treat
- ❖ The most common issue for those living with chronic HCV is severe fatigue
  - ❖ Can also deal with accumulation of fluid in the liver (more advanced cases)



# Hepatitis C (HCV)

- ❖ The incubation period is approximately 45 days; the initial test is done to detect the presence of anti-bodies
- ❖ HCV can survive:
  - ❖ On environmental surfaces from, **up to 3-6 weeks** (CDC)
  - ❖ In syringes from, **1 to 63 days** (syringe dependent)



# Hepatitis C (HCV)

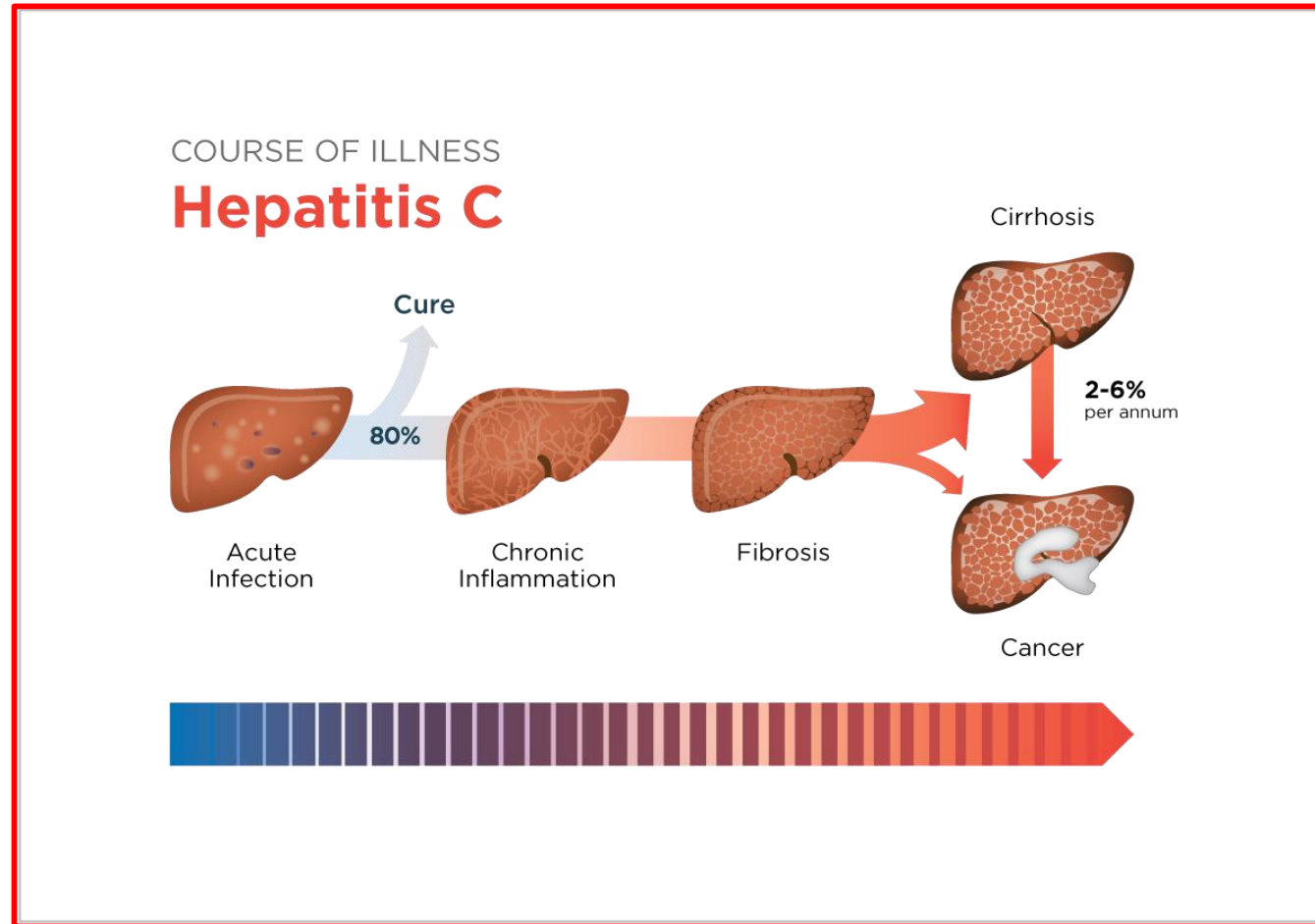
## ❖ Acute:

- ❖ Typically have symptoms similar to the worst flu ever
  - ❖ Abrupt onset of fever, nausea, malaise, anorexia, abdominal discomfort, coffee-colored urine, jaundice
- ❖ **Lasts less than 6 months**, then goes away
- ❖ **About 20% of people with HCV have this type**

## ❖ Chronic:

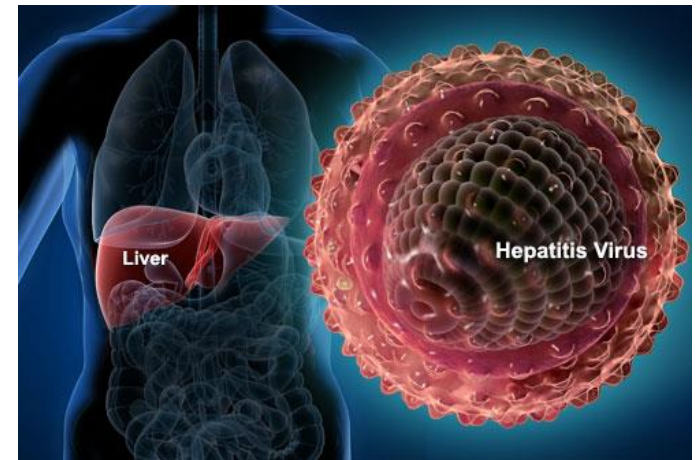
- ❖ Typically symptomless
- ❖ Can be **latent for 20-30 years**, while liver is still being damaged
- ❖ Only about 4% of these individuals with chronic HCV, go on to have serious complications (ie. liver disease)
- ❖ **About 80% of people with HCV have this type**

# Consider the Facts



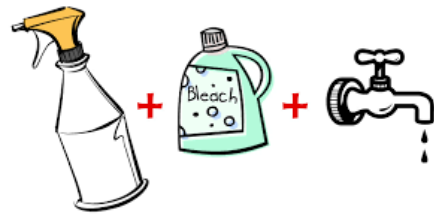
# Consider the Facts

- ❖ Why should you care about HCV?
  - ❖ **One in 100** Americans has chronic HCV infection
  - ❖ HCV is the **most common, chronic, blood-borne** viral infection in the U.S.
  - ❖ Each year, **1- 4%** of people with HCV-related cirrhosis **develop liver cancer**
  - ❖ Approximately **399,000 people** die each year due to hepatitis C



# Hepatitis C (HVC)

- ❖ Outside the body, **HCV can be killed by:**
  - ❖ Autoclaving (combination of heat and pressure)
  - ❖ A bleach and water soak for at least 10 minutes



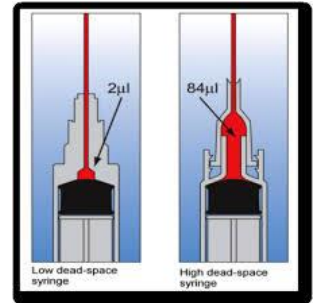
- ❖ Hospital grade virucides (not the typical, household disinfectants)
  - ❖ E.g. Formaldehyde, Glutaraldehyde, Hydrogen peroxide etc...



# Reduce Your Risk of Infection When Injecting Drugs

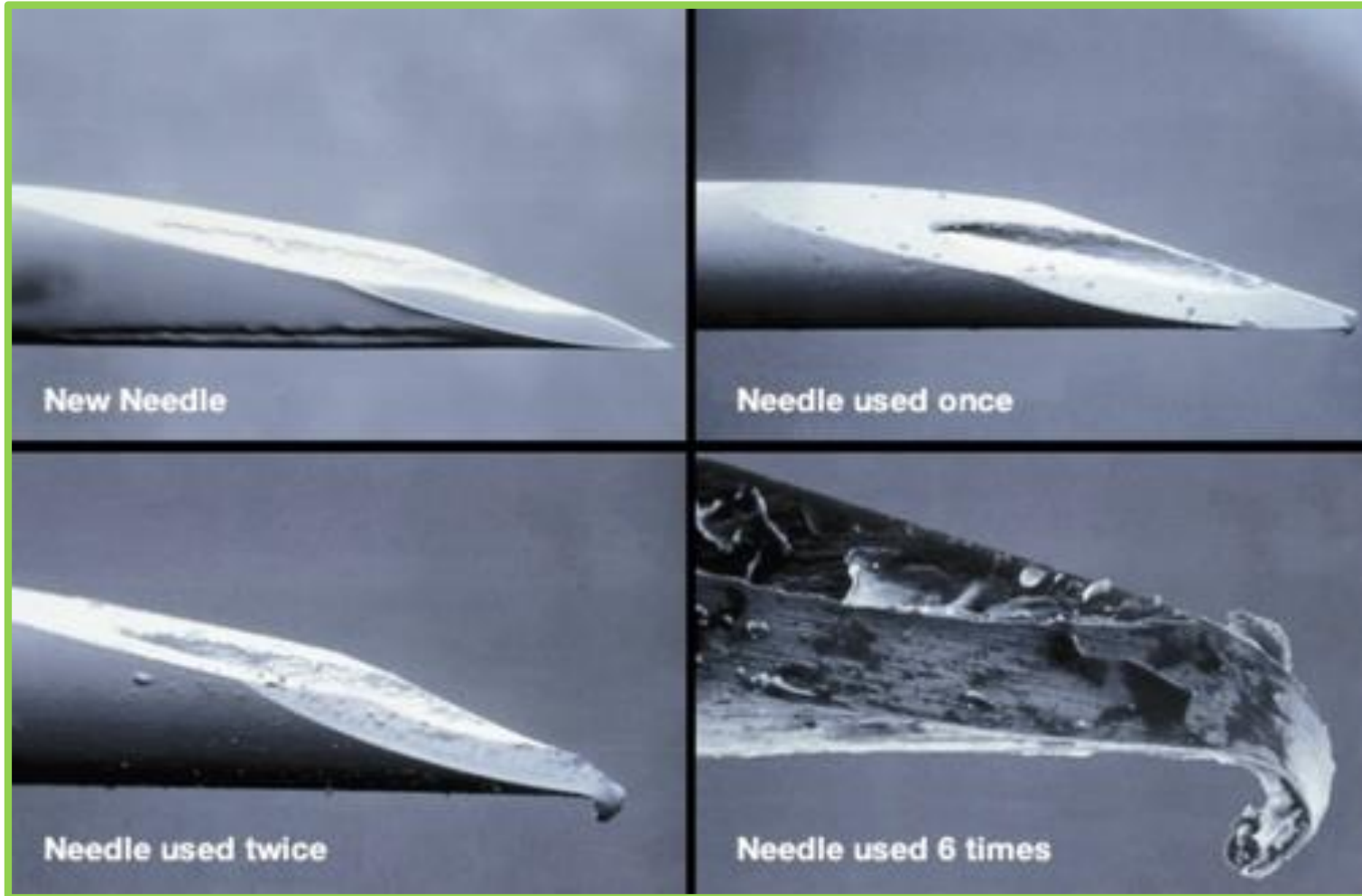
Use **new, clean** injection equipment every time because:

- ❖ Syringes can have dead-space (where fluid—in this case blood—remains even when the plunger is fully depressed)
- ❖ If there is infected blood in water, it can contaminate the container (if the container is plastic or aluminum) so either use glass and wash with soap and water to reuse, or get a new container of water
- ❖ There's no way to disinfect a cotton filter if it gets HCV-infected blood in it





# Avoid Reusing Needles



❖ It may be possible to clean a syringe with a bleach solution but it **cannot guarantee** 100% destruction of viruses like HIV, HBV, and HCV

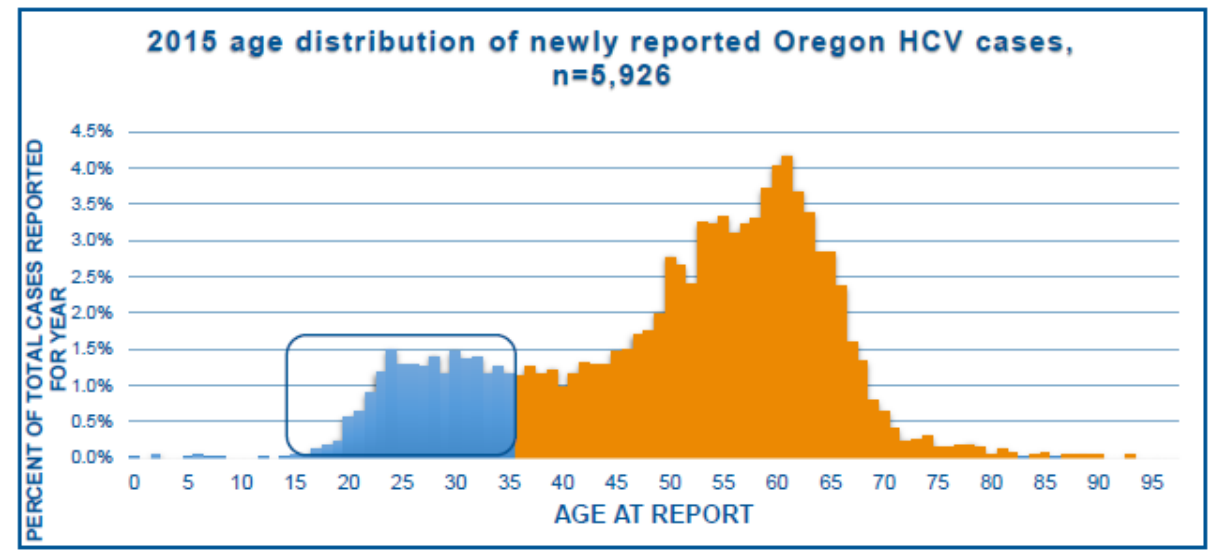
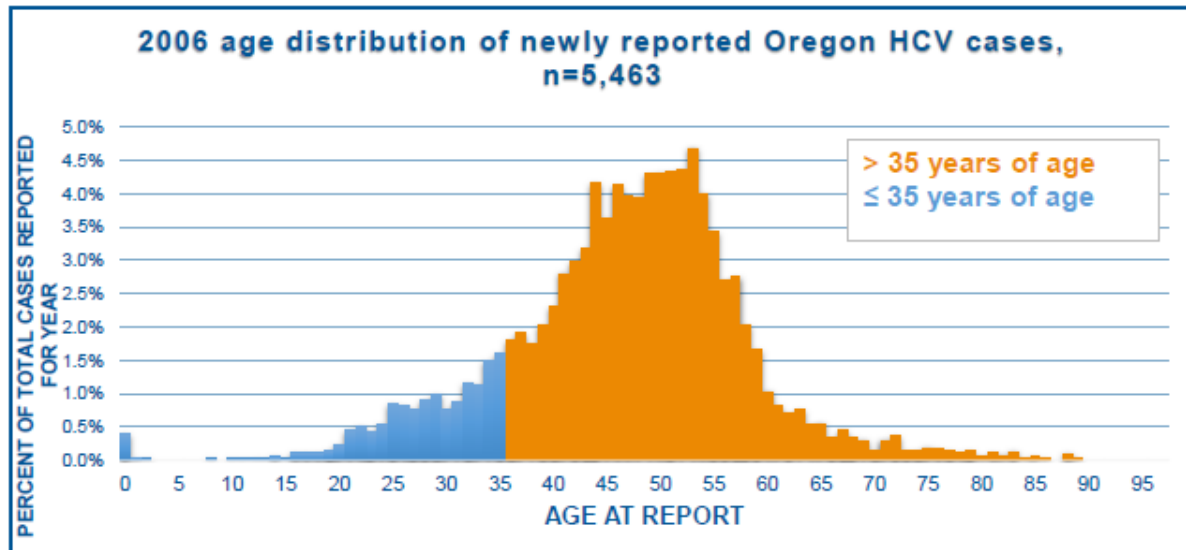
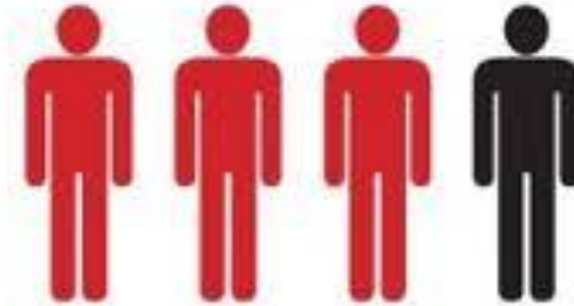
❖ If someone still chooses to reuse a needle... they can cause:

- ❖ Infections
- ❖ Abscesses
- ❖ Vein or tissue damage

# Who is at risk?



More than 75 percent of American adults with hepatitis C are baby boomers



# Ways to Protect Yourself



- ❖ Cover cut/sores
- ❖ Don't share personal care items that might have blood on them (razors, toothbrushes)
- ❖ Don't share drug equipment, especially injection drug equipment, also includes "straws" or "tooters"
- ❖ Use latex barriers (condoms)
- ❖ Get tested!
  
- ❖ If you do happen to test reactive for Hep C:
  - ❖ Go to your primary-care doctor for referrals
  - ❖ Get a liver biopsy to assess the degree of damage to the liver
  - ❖ Get a blood test to learn your genotype. Most have genotype 1 but some have multiple strains
  - ❖ Have your enzyme levels tested
  - ❖ Stop drinking—heavy consumption increase mortality rate

# Who Should Be Tested? (anyone)

- ❖ Persons who have ever snorted/injected illegal drugs
- ❖ Recipients of clotting factor concentrates made before 1987
- ❖ Recipients of blood transfusions, or solid organ transplants before 1992
- ❖ Patients who have ever received long-term hemodialysis treatment
- ❖ Patients with known exposures to HCV
- ❖ All persons with HIV
- ❖ Patients with signs/symptoms of liver disease
- ❖ Children, 18 months and older, born to HCV+ mothers

# Treatment

- ❖ The decision for treatment is dependent on the type (i.e. mild, moderate or advanced)
  - ❖ Should wait to decide treatment, **until fully informed** by doctor of all options
- ❖ There are approximately **30 new** and improved HCV drugs in the trial phase
  - ❖ Can take between **12-24 weeks** of treatment
- ❖ *Remember*, although capable of clearing the virus from your body—**high risk activities can re-expose a person to the virus**

## HEPATITIS C TREATMENT SUCCESS RATES: THEY'VE COME A LONG WAY

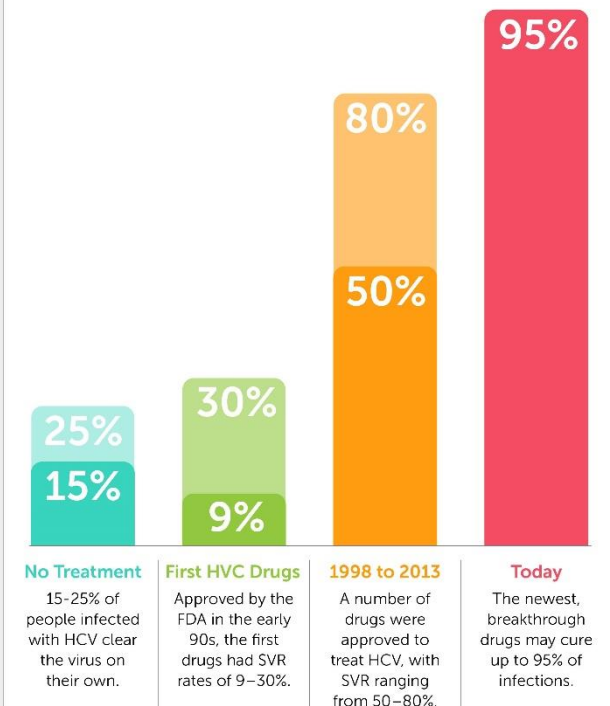
Hepatitis C is an infectious, blood-borne disease that damages the liver over time. But certain drugs can treat — and now cure — the disease.

### SUSTAINED VIROLOGIC RESPONSE (SVR)

[SVR = No trace of hepatitis C virus (HCV) 24 weeks after treatment ends]



### SVR RATES FOR HEPATITIS C



Sources: American Liver Foundation | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs

BROUGHT TO YOU BY 

# Foods and Drugs to **Avoid** When You Have Hepatitis C



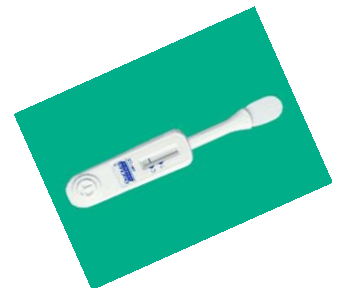
## Foods

- ❖ If you have cirrhosis, your doctor will let you know how much **protein** you need. In the late stages of this condition, protein can be hard for your liver to process which makes toxins build up and interfere with how your brain works
- ❖ Also, avoid foods like:
  - ❖ **Raw oysters or shellfish**, as they may contain bacteria that could cause severe infection
  - ❖ **Fatty, sugary foods**, because they can stress your liver or lead to fat deposits
  - ❖ **Salty foods** if you have fluid buildup in your belly or legs

## Drugs

- ❖ **Acetaminophen**: It can kill liver cells if you combine it with **alcohol**
- ❖ **Ibuprofen**: It can affect how blood platelets clot
- ❖ **Smoking Tobacco and Marijuana**: Can speed up scarring of the liver/ cause cancer
- ❖ **Sleeping pills or tranquilizers**

# Get Tested (Lane)



Know your status and the status of your sexual partner(s)  
*It's a quick oral swab and you get your results in 20 minutes*

**HIVAlliance**

Mon: 3:00-7:00pm  
Thurs: 6:00-8:00pm

Tue: 5:00-7:00pm

Wed: No testing  
Fri: 1:00-5:00pm

**Planned Parenthood**  
Act. No matter what.

Mon: 9:30-6:00pm  
Thurs: 10:30-6:00pm

Tue: 9:30-6:00pm

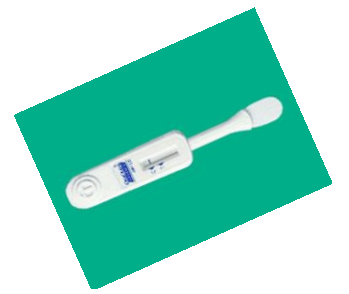
Wed: 9:30-6:00pm  
Fri: 9:30-5:00pm



Just Checking Clinic- Tue: 1:00-4:00pm \$25 Walk-in clinic for all STIs

[gettested.cdc.gov](https://gettested.cdc.gov)

# Get Tested (Douglas)



Know your status and the status of your sexual partner(s)  
*It's a quick oral swab and you get your results in 20 minutes*

**HIVAlliance**

Mon: 11:00-4:00pm

Tue: 11:00-4:00pm

Wed: 11:00-4:00pm

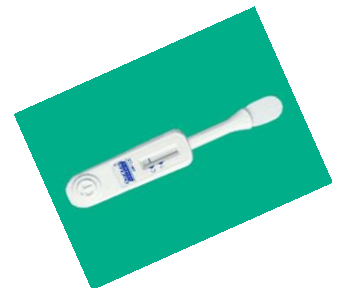
Thurs: No testing

Fri: 11:00-4:00pm

[gettested.cdc.gov](https://gettested.cdc.gov)



# Get Tested (Marion)



Know your status and the status of your sexual partner(s)

*It's a quick oral swab and you get your results in 20 minutes*

**HIVAlliance**

Mon: 11:00am-1:00pm, 5:00pm-7:00pm

Thurs: 5:00pm-7:00pm



Mon: 9:00-4:30pm

Tue: 11:00-6:30pm

Wed: 11:00-6:30pm

Thurs: 10:00-4:30pm

Fri: 8:00-3:30pm

Sat: 9:00-4:30

[gettested.cdc.gov](https://gettested.cdc.gov)



# Thank You--

If you have any questions  
please contact the **HIV Alliance** at:

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[calmasie@allianceor.org](mailto:calmasie@allianceor.org)

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[www.hivalliance.org](http://www.hivalliance.org)