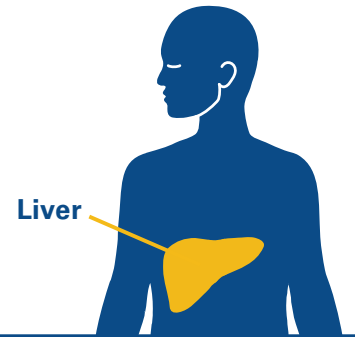


Hepatitis C: have you been tested?

Hepatitis C infection is curable. This virus harms the liver and is passed to others through blood-to-blood contact. There are usually no symptoms. Some people may notice fatigue, nausea or abdominal pain, and a small number will develop jaundice. Around 75% will develop a chronic infection. The infection increases risk of liver cancer or liver failure needing a transplant. It also increases the risk of death.

At the present time, an estimated 29,000 people in BC are living with hepatitis C infection, but have not yet been treated to get rid of the infection.



If you answer yes to even one of the questions below or have any questions about hepatitis C, talk to your healthcare provider about getting tested. The only way to know if you have hepatitis C is to get a blood test.

1 Were you born between 1945 and 1965?

Many exposures to hepatitis C have happened in people born between 1945 and 1965. Until more is known, there is debate about the birth range to test.

2 Were you born in a country where there are more hepatitis C infections?

Hepatitis C infections are more common in parts of Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, Australasia and Oceania.

3 Have you received health care or other services* in places that might have poor infection control?

In some parts of the world, medical, dental or other equipment like needles are reused without proper sterilization. This is rare in Canada.

**Tattoos, piercings, acupuncture, electrolysis, semi-permanent makeup, barbers (or others who reuse razors).*

4 Have you ever injected, snorted or smoked drugs?

The greatest risk is from sharing equipment used for preparing and injecting drugs. Examples are needles, syringes, filters, water or cookers. Sharing equipment used to snort or smoke drugs may also be risky, especially if there are sores or wounds in the mouth or nose.

5 Did you receive any blood or blood products in Canada before 1992?

Today, donated blood is tested for hepatitis C and other infectious diseases. There was no test for hepatitis C until 1992.

6 Have you had sex without a condom with someone who has hepatitis C infection, or with multiple partners, or where there was blood-to-blood contact?

Greatest risk happens during rough anal (more common) or vaginal sex without a condom that causes tearing of mucosal tissue.

7 Have you ever shared personal care items with someone who has a hepatitis C infection?

There is a small risk if there is blood on shared personal care items, such as nail clippers or razors.

8 Did your mother have a hepatitis C infection?

A mother living with hepatitis C infection has about a 5% chance of passing it to the baby during childbirth.

For more information visit:

1. <https://hepatitiseducation.med.ubc.ca/> – Provides information about Hepatitis C in multiple languages
2. <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca> or call 8-1-1 – Provides information about Hepatitis C in multiple languages
3. <http://www.help4hep.org/> – Peer-to-peer helpline for Hepatitis C patients
4. <https://www.catie.ca/> – National source for HIV/Hepatitis C information