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# Hepatitis G Fact Sheet

<b>Cause</b>	<p>Hepatitis G Virus (HGV). Also known as GB virus-C (GBV-C)  HGV and GB virus-C were discovered about the same time, and are thought to be different strains of the same virus. Referred to below as HGV/GBV-C.  HGV/GBV-C was first described in 1995-96  HGV/GBV-C is a single stranded RNA virus belonging to the Flaviviridae family</p>	
<b>Clinical Characteristics</b>	<p>Carrier rate of between 2 and 5% in the general population.  Causes persistent infection for up to nine years in 15-30% of adults.  HGV/GBV-C is often found in co-infections with other viruses, such as hepatitis C virus (HCV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)  There is little proof that Hepatitis G (Hep G) causes serious liver disease at any age. It is possible that HGV/GBV-C may not be a true 'hepatitis' virus.</p>	
<b>Signs and Symptoms</b>	<p>» Almost no cases have symptoms like the other Hepatitis viruses.</p>	
<b>Modes of Transmission</b>	<p>» Transmitted by infected blood or blood products  » HGV/GBV-C can be transmitted by sharing personal items contaminated with the virus and other similar behaviours (parenterally), from mother-to-newborn child at birth (vertical), or various sexual activities.</p>	
<b>Persons at Risk</b>	<p><u>Persons</u></p> <p>Recipients of infected blood or blood products  Hemodialysis patients  Injection Drug Users  People getting tattoos, acupuncture or body piercings with tools that are not sterile  People with impaired immune response  People who engage in prostitution  Homosexuals</p>	<p><u>Level of Risk</u></p> <p>High  High  High  Medium  Medium  Medium  Medium</p>
<b>Prevention</b>	<p>» If you are regularly exposed to blood or blood products from others, try to protect yourself with gloves to reduce the risk of the spread of viruses.  » If you use injection drugs, ensure you use clean, sterile needles. Sharing needles, syringes or other drug-use equipment with others can put you at risk of infection.</p>	
<b>Treatment</b>	<p>» There is currently no recommended treatment for Hep G.</p>	
<b>Canadian Data on the trends of HGV</b>	<p>» evidence of HGV/GBV-C is found in 1-4% of the Canadian blood donor population (2001).</p>	