



Hepatitis C National Inuit Strategic Planning Session Comparison of Select HCV Factsheets and Brochures

Kuujuuaq, Nunavik, QC
January 20 & 21, 2013

The following examples of HCV factsheets and brochures illustrate the range of resources within Inuit regions. The compilation is not exhaustive. The selection includes resources from national non-governmental organizations and federal departments. Each summary provides information about the factsheet or brochure’s date of publication, length, the languages it is available in, its general content, and any web links that may have been included.

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Information for Inuit Community Members
Fact Sheet Women and Hepatitis C



Women and Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C can affect women differently from men. This is because the liver plays an important role in regulating a woman's hormones (estrogen and progesterin).

Periods

It is common for women with hepatitis C symptoms to experience changes with their menstrual cycle. This may include missed or shorter periods. Any change in a woman's menstrual cycle should be discussed with her doctor, as it may or may not be related to hepatitis C.

Menstrual fluid contains blood and other body fluids. Because hepatitis C is transmitted by blood to blood contact, it is possible to transmit hepatitis C through menstruation.

Having sex while menstruating can increase the risk of transmitting hepatitis C, particularly if the sexual partner has any open cuts, wounds or abrasions. Using dental dams for oral sex, and condoms with male partners will reduce the risk of transmission.

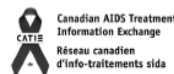
Following standard precautions for infection control will lower the risk of transmitting hepatitis C through menstruation. This includes proper disposal of used tampons and sanitary pads in leak proof plastic bags.

Birth control

Some women with hepatitis C may not be able to tolerate the estrogen hormones in oral contraceptive pills. This is because the liver may have problems breaking down the hormones in the liver and blood.

So it is a good idea for women with hepatitis C who have liver damage or who are experiencing significant symptoms to discuss the use of the contraceptive pill with their doctor.

There are other forms of contraception which can be explored. This includes hormone injections or implants and barrier methods such as the diaphragm. It is important that all of these options are explored with a trusting doctor to find what is best for your situation.



TITLE:	Information for Inuit Community Members: Fact Sheet - Women and Hepatitis C
Source:	Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange
Web Link:	www.pauktuutit.ca/hiv/downloads/FactSheets/WomenAndHepatitisC.pdf
Date:	No date
Total Pages:	2 pages
Languages:	English
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and Hepatitis C • Periods • Birth Control • Menopause • Pregnancy • Breastfeeding
Inuit-Specific:	Yes
Additional Links:	None

Information for Inuit Community Members
Fact Sheet Hepatitis C Testing



TESTING FOR HEPATITIS C

What is Hepatitis C testing?

Hepatitis C testing tells you whether you are infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). This virus infects your liver and can cause severe liver damage and liver cancer. Everyone should be tested for Hepatitis C, especially if you have ever shared needles during tattooing or shared equipment when using street drugs.

When Hepatitis C damages the liver, blood tests for "liver enzymes" may be higher than normal. Hepatitis C can cause liver damage even if your enzyme tests are normal.

How do I get tested for Hepatitis C?

Blood tests for Hepatitis C include Hepatitis C antibody and viral load tests. These are similar to the HIV antibody and viral load tests (See Fact Sheets on these topics). Hepatitis C viral loads can often be in the millions. They don't predict the path of the disease the way HIV viral loads do. The Hepatitis C antibody test may not detect Hepatitis C infection in about 20% of people with both HIV and Hepatitis C. People with HIV and high liver enzymes should consider getting a Hepatitis C viral load test.

Some doctors do a test called a biopsy to check for liver damage. Liver cells are collected using a thin needle. They are studied using a microscope. A biopsy is the best way to know if your liver has been damaged.

When should I get tested?

If you become infected with Hepatitis C, it could take up to six months for the test to show that you have Hepatitis C. If you think you were exposed to Hepatitis C, you should wait at least this long before being tested. During this "window period", even if the test gives a negative result, but you are in fact infected, you could still transmit the Hepatitis C virus to others. So it is important to continue to practise safer sex and not share needles.

What does it mean if I test positive?

A positive test result means that you have tested positive for Hepatitis C. You will get your test result from a doctor or nurse or CHR who should tell you what to expect, and where to get health services and emotional support.



PAUKTUUTIT
 Inuit Women of Canada



Canadian AIDS Treatment
 Information Exchange
 Réseau canadien
 d'Info-traitements sida

TITLE:	Information for Inuit Community Members: Fact Sheet - Hepatitis C Testing
Source:	Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, Canadian Inuit HIV/AIDS Network, and Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange
Web Link:	www.pauktuutit.ca/hiv/downloads/FactSheets/Testing%20for%20Hepatitis%20C.pdf
Date:	No date
Total Pages:	2 pages
Languages:	English
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Hepatitis C testing? • How do I get tested for Hepatitis C? • When should I get tested? • When should I get tested? • Can I keep my test results confidential?
Inuit-Specific:	Yes
Additional Links:	None

Information for Inuit Community Members

Fact Sheet 4 Hepatitis C and Inuit



WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

Hepatitis C is a virus that attacks the liver. Over time, the liver can stop working properly and a person can become very sick and in many cases may die.

How do you get Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is transmitted mainly through contact with blood. People who inject drugs and share needles are at risk of getting the Hepatitis C virus. Also, people who get tattooed or pierced with dirty or shared equipment (such as ink pens) are also at risk for Hepatitis C. Remember, cleaning equipment with bleach and water may not kill the Hepatitis C virus. The Hepatitis C virus is very tough and can live outside the body (on needles or other equipment) for a long time.

Can I get Hepatitis C from Unprotected Sex?

The risk of getting Hepatitis C through unprotected sex is low, though in some cases, when there is bleeding (through tearing or menstruation) during sex, risk is high. Although the risk for Hepatitis C through unprotected sex may be low, the risk of other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), such as HIV and Chlamydia, are very high when you have unprotected sex. Using condoms during sex is a good way to reduce the risk of all STIs.

How is Hepatitis C treated?

Hepatitis C is treated with a combination of drugs called Ribavarin and Interferon, or sometimes just Interferon alone. These drugs are not a cure for Hepatitis C, but they can allow a person with the virus to live longer and with fewer signs of illness.

What are the symptoms of Hepatitis C?

Some of the symptoms of Hepatitis C are fatigue (tiredness), stomach pains, jaundice (yellow skin and eyes) and in extreme cases, partial or complete liver failure causing severe illness or death. Some people with Hepatitis C show no symptoms at all, therefore in many cases, people do not realize that they have Hepatitis C until they get tested. You cannot tell whether someone has Hepatitis C from looking at them.



TITLE:	Information for Inuit Community Members: Fact Sheet 4 - Hepatitis C and Inuit
Source:	Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada
Web Link:	www.pauktuutit.ca/hiv/downloads/FactSheets/What_is_Hep_C.pdf
Date:	No date
Total Pages:	2 pages
Languages:	English
Content:	What is Hepatitis C? How do you get Hepatitis C? Can I get Hepatitis C from Unprotected Sex? How is Hepatitis C treated? What are the symptoms of Hepatitis C? What about Hepatitis A and B? What about Hepatitis A and B?
Inuit-Specific:	Yes
Additional Links:	None

HIV and Hep C

50%-90% of HIV-infected individuals who use injection drugs are also infected with Hep C.*

Liver disease is a serious problem for HIV-infected individuals and is a leading non-AIDS cause of death.†

*CDC: www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/factsheets/condfection.htm, 2007
†CDC: www.cdc.gov/HIV/hepatitis/hepc_and_hiv_en.pdf, 2002

Protecting Others

If you have Hepatitis C:

- Do not give blood or donate organs
- Do not share personal care items
- Do not share tattoo equipment (including ink)
- Do not share drug equipment (including water)
- Cover open sores or breaks in your skin
- Inform your sexual partner(s) if you have Hep C and use a condom/dental dam


It is important to find out if you have Hepatitis C so you can help yourself and protect others

For more information or if you think you might have Hepatitis C, contact your local Health Care Provider

Other Resources


- Public Health Agency of Canada
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hepc/index_e.html
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/hepatitis
- Canadian Liver Foundation
www.liver.ca
- Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE)
www.hepcinfo.ca

If you would like this information in another official language, contact us at 867-920-3367.
Si vous voulez ces informations dans une autre langue officielle, téléphonez-nous au 867-920-3367.



Hepatitis C

Risks, Prevention, and Caring For Yourself



Northwest Territories Health and Social Services

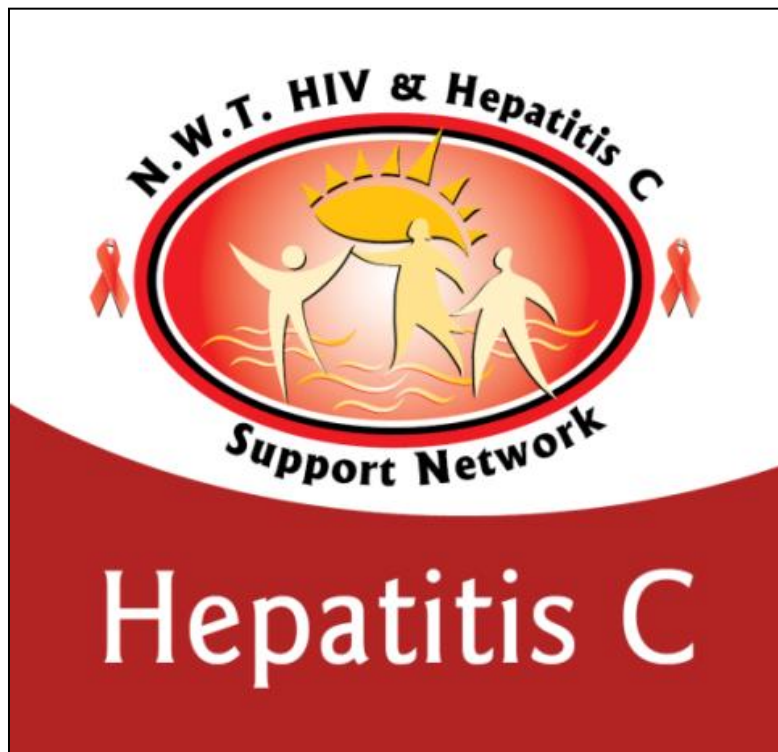
July 2011
www.hlthss.gov.nt.ca

http://www.hlthss.gov.nt.ca/pdf/brochures_and_fact_sheets/diseases_and_conditions/2011/english/hepatitis_c.pdf

TITLE:	Hepatitis C: Risks, Prevention, and Caring for Yourself
Source:	GNWT, Health and Social Services
Web Link:	www.hlthss.gov.nt.ca/pdf/brochures_and_fact_sheets/diseases_and_conditions/2011/english/hepatitis_c.pdf
Date:	July 2011
Total Pages:	2 pages
Languages:	English, French, Chipewyan, Cree, Gwich'in, Inuinnaqtun, Inuktitut, Inuvialuktun, North Slavey, South Slavey, Tlicho
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Hepatitis C • How is Hepatitis C Spread • Am I Infected? • Your liver • If I have Hep C what can I do to live well? • HIV and Hep C • Protecting Others
Inuit-Specific:	Inuit dialects
Additional Links:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hepc/index_e.html • Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/hepatitis • Canadian Liver Foundation: www.liver.ca • Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE): www.hepcinfo.ca



TITLE:	Tattooing and Your Health
Source:	GNWT, Health and Social Services
Web Link:	www.hlthss.gov.nt.ca/pdf/brochures_and_fact_sheets/lifestyles/2005/english/tattooing_and_your_health.pdf
Date:	2005
Total Pages:	2 pages
Languages:	English, French, Chipewyan, Cree, Gwich'in, Inuinnaqtun, Inuktitut, Inuvialuktun, North Slavey, South Slavey, Tlicho
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a Tattoo? • Can tattooing spread infections? • So, you are thinking of getting a tattoo – what to ask, what to look for • The most important decision is who you select to perform the tattoo • Precautions • Personal Aftercare • Signs of Infection
Inuit-Specific:	Versions in Inuit dialects
Additional Links:	• NWT Health and Social Services: www.hlthss.gov.nt.ca



TITLE:	Hepatitis C
Source:	Northwest Territories HIV & Hepatitis C Support Network
Web Link:	nwthsn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/final_hepC.pdf
Date:	No date
Total Pages:	16 pages
Languages:	English
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis C - What it is • Stages of Hepatitis C • Prevalence in the Northwest Territories • The Symptoms of Hepatitis C • The Health Effects of Hepatitis C • How HCV is Transmitted • How Do I Find Out If I Am Infected? • What the Test Involves • If I Am Infected - Living With Hepatitis C • Hepatitis C and Pregnancy • If I Am Not Infected - How Do I Protect Myself? • How to Protect Others • Support For Persons With Hepatitis C • How to Contact Us • Community Health Contacts (including clinics and hospitals)
Inuit-Specific:	No
Additional Links:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre of Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/C/cFAQ.htm • Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hepc/faq-eng.php

Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is the most common blood born disease in Canada effecting approximately 250 000 Canadians, with an estimated 4000 new diagnoses a year. The Aboriginal population is suffering, with rates of Hepatitis C being about 9 times higher than non-Aboriginal populations.



*Hepatitis C Labrador Project
(larger version)*

The disease is caused by the Hepatitis C virus, which is transmitted through blood and bodily fluids. There are no vaccinations.

If you are thinking about getting a tattoo or piercing be sure to go to a professional that can offer sanitized equipment in a clean environment. Do not share personal hygiene items such as toothbrushes, nail clippers, tweezers, razors, etc. Do not share needles or other drug paraphernalia.

Once the Hepatitis C virus has entered your body, it attacks your liver cells inflaming your liver. This can lead to cirrhosis or liver cancer.

How do an individual know if they have the Hepatitis C virus?
Most individuals who have Hepatitis C do not know they are infected because the symptoms are often unnoticeable.

Symptoms to look for are:

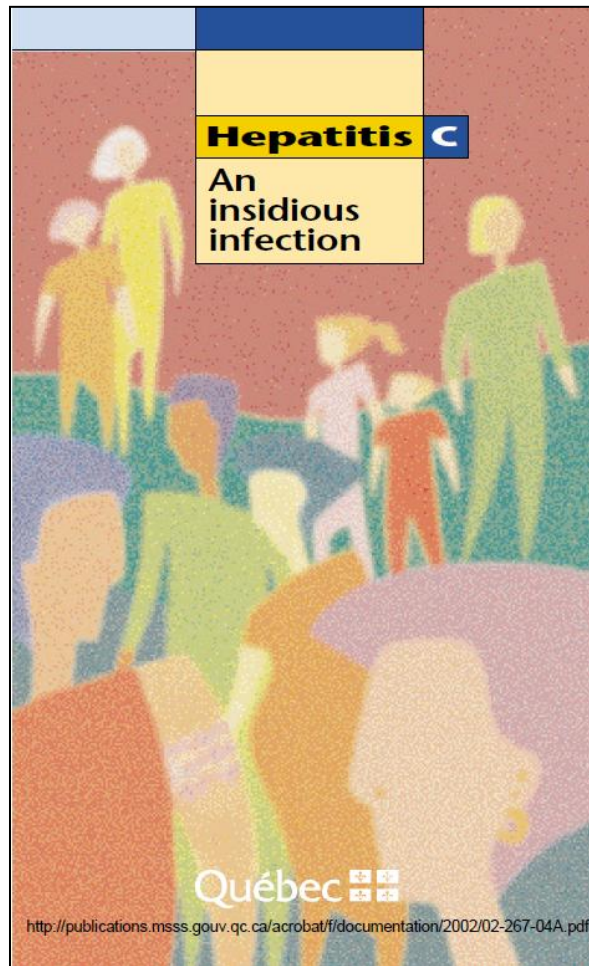
- Jaundice (the whites of the eyes and skin are yellowish)
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and loss of appetite
- Muscle aches and pains
- Fatigue
- Dark coloured urine
- Grey or clayish coloured stools

For further information, please contact:

Phone: (709) 896-8302/896-5144 or 1-800-806-9980

Sponsored by the Labrador Friendship Centre

TITLE:	Hepatitis C
Source:	Labrador Friendship Centre
Web Link:	www.lfchvgb.ca/home/65
Date:	No date
Total Pages:	1
Languages:	English
Content:	Web page only. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Link to tattoos, piercing, personal hygiene items • Symptoms of HCV
Inuit-Specific:	No
Additional Links:	• Contact telephone #s:



TITLE:	Hepatitis C An insidious virus
Source:	Government of Québec, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux
Web Link:	publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/acrobat/f/documentation/2002/02-267-04A.pdf
Date:	April 2002
Total Pages:	32 pages
Languages:	English, French
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you know if you have hepatitis C? • How is the hepatitis C virus transmitted? • Preventing hepatitis C or its complications • Medical follow-up and treatment • Mothers with HCV • Living with HIV and HCV • Giving support to people with hepatitis C • Types of hepatitis • Financial assistance for people infected through a transfusion
Inuit-Specific:	No
Additional Links:	None



What is Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is a chronic liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV). HCV causes inflammation of the liver and can eventually lead to liver damage. Currently, there is no vaccination available to prevent HCV infection, but antiviral therapy is available to help clear the virus from the blood.¹

How can you get Hepatitis C?

HCV is spread from person to person through infected blood. According to the Public Health Agency of Canada 70 to 80% of new infections are due to injection drug use (sharing needles and other drug-using equipment) and the most common risk factors for HCV infection include:

- Tattooing, body piercing when unsterile equipment or techniques are used.
- Needle prick injuries with contaminated equipment in the workplace.
- Exposure during medical or dental procedures that involve the use of contaminated equipment.
- Sharing personal care items with an infected person (razors, toothbrush, etc.).

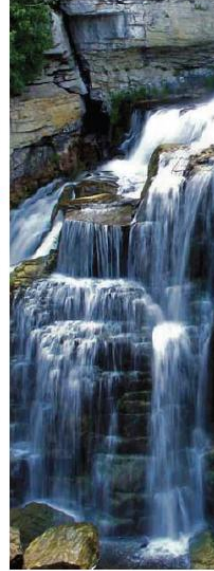
- Unprotected sexual activity that includes contact with blood or an exchange of blood with an infected person.
- Being born to a mother with HCV.

Hepatitis C can be detected in the blood. If you think you are at risk for infection, speak to your health care provider who may suggest a blood test.

How to avoid Hepatitis C infection

According to Health Canada, Infection can be avoided by taking the following precautions:

- Not sharing needles or drug use equipment.
- Wearing latex gloves when coming into contact with another persons blood.
- Safer sex practices that include the use of condoms and avoiding blood to blood contact.
- Ensuring sterile equipment is used during tattooing or body piercing.
- Being tested for HCV before becoming pregnant.



National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO)
 Organisation nationale de la santé autochtone (ONSA)

National Aboriginal Health Organization 2010 | Fact Sheet | 11-15-2010

<http://www.naho.ca/documents/naho/english/factSheets/HepC.pdf>

TITLE:	What is Hepatitis C
Source:	National Aboriginal Health Organization
Web Link:	www.naho.ca/documents/naho/english/factSheets/HepC.pdf
Date:	November 2010
Total Pages:	2
Languages:	English
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Hepatitis C? • How can you get/how can you avoid • What effect does Hep c have on your health • Hep C and First Nations, Inuit and Métis • Hep C and HIV co-infection
Inuit-Specific:	No
Additional Links:	None



FACTSHEET

Hepatitis C

What is hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is an infection of the liver caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV).

How do people get hepatitis C?

HCV is spread when your blood comes into contact with the blood of a person who is infected with the virus. This can happen when people share needles, pipes, straws or other implements for drug use or when unsterile or contaminated needles or ink are used for tattooing or piercing. You can also get HCV from products made from the blood of an infected person. This can happen when you receive blood (in a transfusion) that has not been tested for HCV. Sharing straws when snorting cocaine can also spread HCV. Among HIV-negative people, HCV is not commonly spread during sex or from mother-to-child during childbirth. However, HCV can be transmitted by these methods in HIV-positive people. Although some people can fight off HCV infection, most people exposed to HCV become chronically infected with the virus. That means that their bodies continue to make the virus. People with chronic HCV infection often feel completely healthy even though they carry the virus. They can, however, transmit HCV to others who come in contact with their blood.

Testing for HCV

There are several tests used to find out if you have HCV:

- **HCV antibody test.** This test detects an antibody your immune system makes to attack HCV. If the antibody is detected, it means that you have been exposed to HCV. However, some HIV-positive people whose immune systems are weakened may not produce this antibody or take months to make this antibody even though they are infected. That's why the RNA test (see below) is important.
- **HCV RNA test.** This test checks for the presence of HCV's genetic material; this can confirm HCV infection and tell how much virus is in the blood.
- **HCV genotyping test.** There are at least six types of HCV—1, 2, 3, 4 and so on—and many subtypes—1a, 1b, etc. This test will tell you which type (and possibly subtype) of HCV you have. Type 1 is the most common in North America.

Initial HCV infection

When first infected with HCV, most people do not develop symptoms of this viral infection. In some people, the following symptoms may occur:

- Tiredness;
- loss of appetite;

1-800-263-1638 WWW.CATIE.CA

HEPATITIS C
page 1 of 8

<http://www.catie.ca/sites/default/files/Hepatitis%20C.pdf>

TITLE:	Factsheet: Hepatitis C
Source:	Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE)
Web Link:	www.catie.ca/sites/default/files/Hepatitis%20C.pdf
Date:	No date
Total Pages:	8 pages
Languages:	English

...continued

Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is hepatitis C? • How do people get hepatitis C? • Testing for HCV • Initial HCV infection • Long-term HCV infection • Why is the liver important? • Monitoring liver health • Liver biopsy • Newer tests • HCV viral load test • Treatment of HCV • Ribavirin • Genotype matters • HIV and HCV co-infection • Is treatment working? • Reinfection • Which infection should be treated first—HIV or HCV? • HAART and the liver • A journey to health • Supplements and herbs • Useful websites • Availability of treatments
Inuit-Specific:	No
Additional Links:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CATIE: www.hepcinfo.ca/ • Canadian Association for the Study of the Liver: www.hepatology.ca • Canadian Liver Foundation: www.liver.ca • HIVandHepatitis.com • www.HIVandhepatitis.com

HIV and Hepatitis C Co-infection

Are you HIV positive and newly diagnosed with hepatitis C (Hep C)? Do you have one virus and think you might be infected with the other?

If so, this brochure answers some basic questions about living with both HIV and Hep C.

What is HIV and Hep C co-infection?

When people have HIV and another major infection such as Hep C, they are co-infected. HIV is a virus that attacks the immune system, killing the CD4+ cells that help the body fight off infection. Hep C is a virus that attacks the liver, and can cause liver damage (cirrhosis), liver failure and liver cancer. You might also hear the Hep C virus referred to as HCV.

How do I know if I'm co-infected?

If you have either HIV or Hep C, you are at risk for also having the other virus because both can enter your body the same way.

The only way to find out for sure if you are infected with HIV and Hep C is by being tested. Each virus is detected by a different test, so you need both an HIV test and a Hep C test.

You might be co-infected and not know it. Both are slow acting viruses. People can be infected for years with either virus without having any signs or symptoms of illness.

Why is HIV and Hep C co-infection a problem?

Being infected with both HIV and Hep C is a problem because each one is very hard on your body. When you are co-infected, each disease makes the other one worse. You can get sicker faster, and it is hard

to treat both diseases at the same time. HIV can cause the Hep C virus to reproduce more quickly. People who are co-infected can develop liver damage and liver cancer more quickly than people who have only Hep C. Having HIV makes Hep C harder to treat because the immune system is weaker. Having Hep C also makes HIV harder to treat. Many of the medications used to treat HIV are processed by the liver. A liver badly damaged by Hep C cannot process drugs as well. Although generally safe, the risk of side effects with HIV medications may be slightly higher.

I have HIV. What are my treatment options for Hep C?

Your doctor will see how healthy your liver is by doing blood tests and other procedures such as an ultrasound or biopsy of your liver. You will then discuss Hep C treatment options based on the health of your liver, immune system and other factors. Together you will decide if treatment for Hep C is right for you at this time.

In co-infection, Hep C treatment is a combination of two antiviral drugs: ribavirin (Pegatron capsules or Copegus) and a long-acting form of interferon called pegylated interferon (Pegatron or Pegasys). Both are taken for about one year. Once you start taking these medications, your doctor will monitor your blood regularly to see whether the drugs are working. If the level of Hep C virus in your blood has not fallen significantly after three months, your doctor will likely stop therapy.

How well you respond to treatment depends on many factors. Among the most important are the strain of Hep C you have and the extent of liver damage. Some strains are harder to treat than others. And the more extensive the liver damage, the poorer the response will probably be.

As well, people who have been co-infected with Hep C for many years generally do not do as well as

people who are recently infected. Your age, weight and the amount of Hep C virus in your blood can also affect treatment success.

For information about your treatment options, check out the *CATIE Fact Sheet on Pegatron* and *CATIE Fact Sheet on Pegasys*.

Are there side effects to Hep C treatment?

Yes. Almost all people taking treatment for Hep C will experience side effects. Some common ones are:

- flu-like symptoms such as fatigue, headaches and/or muscle pain
- depression
- anemia
- irritability

Side effects often become less intense during the course of the treatment. And there are many ways to manage them. For example, you can reduce flu-like symptoms by taking over-the-counter medication the day of interferon treatment.

Depression is a very common side effect that deserves attention. About one out of every three people treated for Hep C can develop mental health problems, including depression. Because of this risk, if you have a history of serious mental health problems, or you are drinking alcohol or taking street drugs, you may not be ready for Hep C treatment right away.

Some doctors start their patients on medications to minimize the risk of depression a month before starting Hep C therapy. If you are using substances, you may want to talk to your doctor or nurse about how to quit drinking alcohol or get help for dependence on street drugs. These changes will make it easier to take treatment.

Because of side effects, some people are tempted to stop their Hep C treatment. But for the treatment to



Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange
Réseau canadien d'info-traitements sida

<http://www.catie.ca/pdf/Brochures/HEPCENG.pdf>

TITLE:	HIV and Hepatitis C Co-infection
Source:	Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE)
Web Link:	www.catie.ca/pdf/Brochures/HEPCENG.pdf
Date:	No date
Total Pages:	2 pages
Languages:	English and French
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is HIV and Hep C co-infection? • How do I know if I'm co-infected? • Why is HIV and Hep C co-infection a problem? • I have HIV. What are my treatment options for Hep C? • Are there side effects to Hep C treatment? • Are Hep C treatments safe during pregnancy? • Do Hep C treatments have any effect on HIV treatments? • What can I do to protect my health? • Want more information about HIV and Hep C co-infection? • What you need to know
Inuit-Specific:	No
Additional Links:	None

Public Health Agency of Canada / Agence de la santé publique du Canada

HEPATITIS C

get the facts

WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

Hepatitis C is a chronic liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV). An estimated 250,000 people in Canada are infected with HCV, and between 3,200 and 5,000 individuals are newly infected with HCV each year.

Why is hepatitis C a health concern?

Initial, or acute, infection with HCV usually shows no symptoms, with less than a quarter of those infected showing symptoms like jaundice (yellowing of the skin and/or eyes) or fatigue. Some individuals will recover from their infection, but 75-85 per cent of those infected will progress to the chronic (carrier) state. Chronic hepatitis C has a silent nature and can remain asymptomatic for decades, but can eventually lead to liver damage, liver cancer and the need for liver transplantation. Approximately 20 per cent (one in five) of those infected with HCV are unaware of their infection.

Could I have hepatitis C?

HCV is spread through contact with infected blood. While many people became infected through blood and blood products in the past, between 70 and 80 per cent of HCV transmission in Canada today is due to injecting drug use and sharing of contaminated needles and other drug-using paraphernalia (e.g., straws, pipes, spoons, cookers, etc.).




YOU CAN HAVE IT AND NOT KNOW IT.

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hepc/index_e.html

Canada

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hepc/pubs/getfacts-informezevous/pdf/hepc-brochure-eng.pdf>

TITLE:	Hepatitis C: Get the Facts
Source:	Public Health Agency of Canada
Web Link:	www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hepc/pubs/getfacts-informezevous/pdf/hepc-brochure-eng.pdf
Date:	2009
Total Pages:	7 page brochure
Languages:	English French
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Hepatitis C • Why is hepatitis C a health concern? • Could I have hepatitis C? • How can I find out if I have hepatitis C? • Why do I need my liver? • How can I avoid getting hepatitis C? • What if I have hepatitis C? • Remember
Inuit-Specific:	No
Additional Links:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hepc/index_e.html

 Health Canada / Santé Canada	Your health and safety... our priority. / <i>Votre santé et votre sécurité... notre priorité.</i>
Hepatitis C Updated May 2009	<h1 style="margin: 0;">IT'S YOUR HEALTH</h1>
This article was produced in collaboration with the Public Health Agency of Canada.	
<h2 style="margin: 0;">Hepatitis C</h2>	
	<p>The Issue</p> <p>Hepatitis C is a chronic liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV). An estimated 250,000 people in Canada are infected with HCV. Because many people do not have symptoms when they are infected, it is important for those at risk to take action to avoid infecting others.</p> <p>Background</p> <p>Although HCV has existed for a long time, it was only identified in 1989. HCV causes inflammation of the liver, which can progress to cirrhosis (extensive scarring that can affect the normal function of the liver).</p> <p>In 2007, nearly 8,000 individuals were newly infected with HCV. About 20% of those infected are unaware of their infections. With initial (acute) HCV infection, less than 25% of those infected have symptoms. Some people recover from their infection, but 75-85% progress to the chronic (carrier) state. People with chronic hepatitis C may not have symptoms for decades. Approximately 35% of those who have chronic hepatitis C, do not know that they are infected.</p> <p>Health Risks of Hepatitis C</p> <p>HCV is spread through contact with infected blood. In the past, many people became infected through blood and blood products. Now, between 70-80% of HCV</p>
<p>transmission in Canada is due to injection drug use. This includes the sharing of contaminated needles and other drug-using equipment, such as straws, pipes, spoons and cookers.</p> <p>You are most at risk for HCV infection if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inject or snort drugs or have done so in the past. The risk increases if you share needles, straws, pipes, spoons, cookers and other drug equipment which could be contaminated with blood. Cleaning equipment with bleach does not effectively kill the virus. • Were exposed to contaminated blood or blood products or had an organ transplant before 1992. • Get a tattoo, body piercing or acupuncture using unsterile equipment or techniques. • Are pricked by a needle or sharp equipment that has infected blood on it, in a workplace situation such as a healthcare facility. • Are exposed, either in Canada or abroad, to medical or dental practices where infection control precautions are not taken, or contaminated equipment is used. • Share personal care articles such as razors, scissors, nail clippers or a toothbrush with an infected person. 	
	
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/alt_formats/pacrb-dgapcr/pdf/iyh-vsv/diseases-maladies/hepc-eng.pdf	

TITLE:	It's Your Health: Hepatitis C
Source:	Health Canada
Web Link:	www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/alt_formats/pacrb-dgapcr/pdf/iyh-vsv/diseases-maladies/hepc-eng.pdf
Date:	May 2002 (Updated May 2009)
Total Pages:	2 pages
Languages:	English French
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Issue • Background • The Health Risks • Health effects • Minimizing Risks • Government of Canada's Role • Need More Info
Inuit-Specific:	No
Additional Links:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHAC Hepatitis C Program: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hepc/index_e.html • PHAC details about HCV rates in Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/sti-its-surv-epi/nat_surv_e.html • Health Canada - health and safety issues: www.healthcanada.gc.ca/iyh

Hepatitis C: What you need to know

Hepatitis C is an infection caused by the hepatitis C virus, which is carried in the blood. This virus can cause liver disease, including cirrhosis and cancer.

More than 110,000 people in Ontario are infected with the hepatitis C virus. Often there are no symptoms for many years, and about 35,000 Ontarians do not realize they are infected.

How you could become infected

You are at risk of hepatitis C infection if you share blood. For instance:

- Sharing used needles or syringes (for steroid, prescription or street drug use)
- Sharing other drug-using equipment such as cookers, cotton, crack cocaine and water pipes (even if you only shared them once or briefly)
- Sharing straws, bills or other utensils used for snorting cocaine or other drugs
- Receiving a blood transfusion or blood products before 1992
- Needle-stick injuries
- Tattooing, piercing or acupuncture with equipment that may have been improperly sterilized
- Many of the risk factors listed above are also associated with HIV (See Co-infection with HIV)

Lower risks of infection:

- Sexual activity that includes contact with blood or exchange of blood
- An expectant mother carrying the hepatitis C virus can infect her unborn baby
- Sharing razors, toothbrushes, tweezers, manicure or pedicure equipment (such as nail clippers)

How to protect yourself from infection

- Do not share needles or drug-using equipment
- Do not share personal items such as razors, toothbrushes, tweezers, manicure or pedicure equipment
- Wear protective gloves if you are likely to be in contact with someone else's blood
- Avoid blood-to-blood contact during sexual activity
- If you are getting a tattoo or piercing, make sure that:
 - (a) the service you choose is regulated or inspected
 - (b) the needle is single-use disposable and has never been used (if you're getting acupuncture, make sure the needles are sterile)
 - (c) all other equipment is sterile

How the hepatitis C virus can affect you

Without treatment, over 80 percent of hepatitis C infections progress to chronic hepatitis C, a disease that attacks your liver. After 10 to 20 years, chronic hepatitis C can cause cirrhosis. After 20 to 40 years it can cause liver cancer.

Common symptoms

Because hepatitis C progresses slowly, most infected people experience no symptoms at all for many years after being infected. If you do have symptoms, they could include:

- Jaundice (your skin or eyes turn yellow)
- Itching in different parts of your body

See your health care provider if you believe you may have been exposed to the hepatitis C virus.

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http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/program/hepc/hepc_pdf/hepc_factsheet.pdf

TITLE:	Hepatitis C: What You Need to Know
Source:	Government of Ontario, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Web Link:	www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/program/hepc/hepc_pdf/hepc_factsheet.pdf
Date:	March 2007
Total Pages:	2 pages
Languages:	10 languages: English, French, Arabic, Hindi, Italian, Vietnamese, Punjabi, Tagalog (Filipino) Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you could become infected • How to protect yourself from infection • How the hepatitis C virus can affect you • Common symptoms • How hepatitis C is detected • Co-infection with HIV • Treatment • How to avoid infecting others if you have hepatitis C • Where to go to learn more
Inuit-Specific:	No
Additional Links:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.hepContario.ca • www.health.gov.on.ca/hepatitec

Hepatitis B Facts

Hepatitis B is a disease caused by a virus that attacks the liver. This virus can cause lifelong infection, scarring of the liver, liver cancer, liver failure and death.

Hepatitis B can affect anyone. Get vaccinated! Hepatitis B is preventable.

Your risk of getting hepatitis B is higher if you:

- Have sex with someone who has hepatitis B
- Have sex with more than one partner
- Are a man and have sex with a man
- Live in the same house as someone who has a lifelong hepatitis B infection
- Have a job that involves handling human blood
- Use needle drugs
- Are a patient or work in a home for the developmentally disabled
- Have a blood disorder where your blood has difficulty clotting (hemophilia)
- Travel to areas where hepatitis B is common
- Have parents who were born in Southeast Asia, Africa, the Amazon Basin in South America, the Pacific Islands or the Middle East

If you are at risk, please ask your nurse/doctor about the hepatitis B vaccine.

Hepatitis B spreads through direct contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected person. For example, you can get hepatitis B by having sex or sharing needles with someone who has it. A baby can get hepatitis B from an infected mother during childbirth. It is not spread through food or water or by casual contact.

Some people never fully recover from hepatitis B. They can spread the virus to others for the rest of their lives.

Sometimes a person with hepatitis B has no symptoms at all. To find out if you have hepatitis B, you need to be tested.

Symptoms of hepatitis B are:

- Yellow skin or eyes
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Stomach pain
- Joint pain
- Feeling very tired and not able to work for weeks or months

There is no cure for hepatitis B. This is why prevention is so important. Getting three doses of the hepatitis B vaccine is the best protection.

All pregnant women should be tested for hepatitis B early in their pregnancy. If the test is positive, the baby should receive vaccine and a shot called H-BIG (hepatitis B immune globulin) at birth.

People who should get the vaccine include:

- All babies, at birth
- All children under age 19 who have not yet received the vaccine
- People whose behavior puts them at higher risk
- People who have a job involving touching or handling human blood
- People who live in the same home as someone with hepatitis B
- Residents and staff of homes for developmentally disabled people
- People with end-stage kidney disease, including people receiving dialysis
- People who travel to places with high or mid-levels of hepatitis B
- People with chronic liver disease
- People with HIV
- Anyone wanting protection from hepatitis B



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Munahitigiykikut Inuuthikimullu
Department of Health and Social Services
Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

<http://www.hss.gov.nu.ca/PDF/Hepatitis%20B%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

November 2010

TITLE:	Hepatitis B Facts
Note:	A Nunavut factsheet for hepatitis C could not be identified.
Source:	Government of Nunavut, Health and Social Services
Web Link:	www.hss.gov.nu.ca/PDF/Hepatitis%20B%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf
Date:	November 2010
Total Pages:	1 page
Languages:	English
Content:	Web page
Inuit-Specific:	No Inuktitut versions identified
Additional Links:	None