

Topic: Hepatitis

- “Hepatitis” – Inflammation of the liver
- Most common types: Hep A, Hep B, Hep C

	Mode of Transmission	Who is at risk?	Signs/Symptoms of Infection	Treatment/Prevention
Hep A				
Hep B				
Hep C				

Hep A

- **Mode of Transmission**
 - Person-to-person via fecal-oral route
- **Who is at risk?**
 - Those who:
 - Travel/live in countries where Hep A is common
 - Have sexual contact with someone who has Hep A
 - Are MSM
 - Use recreational drugs, whether injected or not
 - Have clotting-factor d/o (e.g. hemophilia)
 - Are household members/caregivers or a person infected with Hep A
- **Signs/Symptoms**
 - More likely to occur in adults than in children. Usually last less than 2 months, although some people can be ill for as long as 6 months.
 - Fever
 - Fatigue
 - Loss of appetite
 - Nausea/vomiting
 - Abd pain
 - Dark urine
 - Clay-colored BM
 - Joint pain
 - Jaundice (yellowing of the skin)
- **Prevention/Treatment**
 - Prevention: Frequent hand-washing, Hep A vaccination (2 doses)
 - Treatment: Rest, adequate nutrition, fluids, & medical monitoring
 - Most people feel sick for several months but usually do not have lasting liver damage

Hep B

- **Acute vs. Chronic**
 - Acute: First 6 months post-exposure to HBV; inflammation of liver
 - Chronic: Refers to illness that occurs when HBV remains in a person’s body for more than 6 months

- 1.25 million people in US are chronically infected

- **Mode of Transmission**

- Person-to-person via blood, semen, or other bodily fluids
- In U.S., most commonly spread through sexual contact

- **Who is at risk?**

- Anyone having sex with an infected partner
- People with multiple sex partners
- MSM
- People who inject drugs
- People who live with someone with Hep B
- People with chronic liver disease, ESRD, or HIV infection
- Health care/public safety workers exposed to blood
- Travelers to certain countries

- **Signs/Symptoms**

- Affects liver
- Some have no symptoms, especially young children
- Most adults have symptoms that appear within 3 months; similar to a flu-like illness:

- Fever
- Extreme fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Anorexia
- Nausea/vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Dark urine
- Clay-colored BM
- Rash
- (Sometimes) Joint pain
- Jaundice

- Symptoms of chronic Hep B may take up to 30 years to develop, and chronic HBV can lead to liver cancer. Many people with chronic Hep B do not have symptoms & do not know they're infected.

- **Virus Characteristics**

- Very contagious; can live outside the body for up to 7 months

- **Prevention/Treatment**

- Prevention: Hep B vaccination (3 doses) available and effective for post-exposure
 - Highly recommended to receive it if you are around blood and body fluids
 - Series of 3 shots given at 0, 1, and 6-month intervals
 - 95% effective and is safe
 - 95% of children and 90% of adults receiving the full 3-dose series develop protective antibodies
 - Most commonly reported side-effects are pain at the injection site and mild-to-moderate fever

- Risk of Chronic Infection:
 - 6% if the person is infected after the age of 5 with no vaccine
 - 0% with vaccine and immunity
 - Treatment: Rest, adequate nutrition, fluids, & medical monitoring
 - Most people feel sick for several months but usually do not have lasting liver damage
 - Those with chronic Hep B should be eval for liver problems and monitored on a reg basis

Hep C

- **Acute vs. Chronic**
 - Acute: inflammation of the liver that lasts less than 6 months post-exposure to HCV. 15-25% of people “clear” HCV w/o treatment. Approx 75-85% will develop chronic Hep C.
 - Chronic: Long-term illness (lasts more than 6 months) when HCV remains in a person’s body. Can lead to serious liver problems (e.g. liver damage, cirrhosis, liver failure, liver cancer)
- **Incidence**
 - 4 million people in the US are infected, of which 3.2 million are chronically infected (80%)
 - Most infections are due to direct contact with contaminated blood, as through the use of shared equipment to inject drugs
- **Mode of Transmission**
 - Person-to-person, usually via blood
 - Today most people become infected with Hep C by sharing needles/equipment to inject drugs
 - Before widespread screening began in 1992, Hep C was commonly spread through blood transfusions and organ transplants
 - Can be spread through sex but scientists do not know hoe frequently this occurs
- **Who is at risk?**
 - Those who:
 - Currently inject drugs OR injected drugs in the past
 - Have HIV infection
 - Have abnormal liver tests or liver disease
 - Received donated blood or organs before 1992
 - Have been exposed to blood on the job through a needle stick or injury with a sharp object
 - Are on hemodialysis
- **Virus Characteristics**
 - Can survive outside the body for up to 16 hours
- **Signs/Symptoms**
 - 80% of people infected do not have signs/symptoms
 - If symptoms occur with acute infection, 2-6 months post-exposure. Up to 30 years for symptoms of chronic Hep C to appear.

- Affects liver
- When symptoms appear, often a sign of advanced liver disease; similar to a flu-like illness:
 - Fever
 - Extreme fatigue
 - Loss of appetite
 - Anorexia
 - Nausea/vomiting
 - Abdominal pain
 - Dark urine
 - Clay-colored BM
 - Rash
 - (Sometimes) Joint pain
 - Jaundice
- Chronic HCV can lead to liver cancer
- **Prevention/Treatment**
 - Prevention:
 - Do not share needles/equipment to inject cosmetic substances, drugs, and steroids.
 - Do not use personal items that may have come in contact with infected person's blood (e.g. razors, nail clippers, toothbrushes, glucose monitors).
 - Do not get tattoos/body piercings from an unlicensed facility or in an informal setting.
 - Currently no vaccine to prevent Hep C, but there is treatment available.
 - Treatment: Rest, adequate nutrition, fluids, antiviral medication

Resources/Clinics

Downtown Needle Exchange Medical Clinic:

[2124 4th Ave](#) (4th & Blanchard in Belltown)

Mon-Fri 1:00-5:00 pm, Sat 2:00-4:00pm

Walk-ins welcome!

- Abscess treatment and care
- HIV/hepatitis testing and counseling
- Hepatitis A & B vaccinations
- Colds and upper respiratory infections
- TB screening

Hepatitis Education Project

The Maritime Building

911 Western Ave #302 (Between Madison & Marion St.)

(206) 732-0311 or (800) 218-6932

M-F 9:00am-5:00pm

Walk-in clinics on Tues 10am-2pm

Free services for:

- Hep C testing and counseling
- Hep A & B vaccinations
- 1-on-1 case management
- Youth outreach

PHRA - University District Needle Exchange

1415 NE 43rd St (Behind the USPS on University Way)

(206) 330-5777

Tues, Thurs: 5:00-7:00pm; Fri, Sat: 1:00-5:00pm

Free services for:

- Hep C testing
- Vein care
- Mobile syringe exchange (contact Shilo at (530) 454-5410)
- Female staff only on Tuesdays