

HEPATITIS C

COUNSELING AND TESTING

GUIDELINES
(July 2006)



Georgia Division of
Public Health

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Hepatitis C virus (HCV) Prevention

◆ Two critical components:

- Counseling sessions
 - Goal: to support individuals in making behavioral changes that will reduce their risk of acquiring or transmitting hepatitis C
- Testing
 - Preliminary hepatitis C screening of “at risk” individuals to determine exposure status

Identify client’s personal risk behaviors

◆ Assess clients for risk factors associated with transmission of hepatitis C

- Persons who ever injected illegal drugs, even once and /or persons with a history of snorting drugs
- Persons who received transfusion, blood products, or organ transplant prior to July 1992
- Persons who were notified who received blood from a donor who later tested positive for HCV
- Persons with multiple tattoos and body piercing, particularly those done by non-professionals
- Persons who have multiple sex partners
- Long-term hemodialysis patients
- HIV positive patients
- Healthcare, emergency, public safety workers after a needle stick/mucosal exposures to HCV positive blood
- Persons born to HCV positive mothers

Identify safer goal behaviors

- ### **◆ Clients can take actions to reduce their risk for HCV infection**
- Get into substance abuse treatment program (if currently using)
 - Do not share syringes or drug preparation equipment
 - Use bleach and water to clean equipment

How to Prevent Others from Being Infected

- Do not donate blood, body organs, tissue or sperm.
- Cover cuts and sores on skin

- Use latex condoms and inform partners of HCV status.
- Do not share personal items such as razors, toothbrushes, nail clippers with others.
- Do not share syringes, drug preparation or snorting equipment.

Providing test results

- ◆ Describe test results clearly
- ◆ Explain meaning of results & discuss implications
- ◆ Make referrals and provide support

Explain meaning of negative result

- ◆ Negative Test Result
 - Explain that at this time no antibodies were detected
 - If risk behavior occurred in the distant past, reassure client of negative result
 - If risk behavior occurred in the past 6 months, encourage client to retest within 3 to 6 months (the incubation period for HCV ranges from 2 weeks to 6 months)
 - If risk behavior ongoing, make client aware of risk of getting viral hepatitis, HIV, and other STDs.

Counseling messages for HCV negative persons

- ◆ Active Injection Drug Users
 - Always use your own set of works if you inject drugs, and never share your works with anyone else.
 - Use only sterile syringes obtained from a reliable source (e.g., pharmacies)
 - If you do not have a new syringe, bleach carefully. In practice, bleach may not effectively kill HCV.
 - Don't share or re-use cookers, cotton, water, or even tourniquets (ties, belts).
 - Discuss entering drug treatment.
- ◆ Avoid unprotected sex
- ◆ There is no vaccine to prevent hepatitis C.

Explain meaning of positive HCV result

- ◆ Positive Test Result
 - Explain to the client that at some point, he/she has been infected with HCV
 - This test cannot tell if they are currently infected; about 15% will have cleared the virus (recovered) on their own
 - Tell the client that HCV is a virus that affects the liver
 - It can take years (even decades) for the disease to progress. Many people have this virus for a long time before they get sick, and many never get sick
 - Provide client with written information/brochures to take home and proceed with additional counseling messages

Counseling messages for HCV positive persons

To protect liver from further harm:

- ◆ Do not drink alcohol
- ◆ Do not start any new medications, including over the counter and herbal medicines without first consulting with a health care provider
- ◆ Get vaccinated against hepatitis A and B (if appropriate)

To reduce transmission to others:

- ◆ Do not donate blood, body organs, other tissue, or semen
- ◆ Do not share personal items (razor, toothbrush, nail clipper) that might have blood on them
- ◆ Cover cuts and sores on the skin

For persons injecting drugs:

- ◆ Vaccinate against hepatitis A & B, if susceptible
- ◆ Never share syringes, needles, or drug preparation equipment
- ◆ Encourage user to stop injecting
 - Discuss substance abuse treatment programs (see page 6)

Persons with one long-term steady sex partner:

- ◆ Should discuss with their partner
 - Risk of sexual transmission (low but not absent)
 - Counseling and testing of partner may provide couple with reassurance
 - Some couples might decide to use barrier precautions to lower limited risk further

Persons with multiple sex partners:

- ◆ At risk for sexually transmitted infections, e.g., HIV, HBV, gonorrhea, chlamydia, etc.
- ◆ Ways to reduce risk:
 - Limit number of partners
 - Use latex condoms
 - Get vaccinated against hepatitis B
 - Persons engaging in anal/oral sex should also get vaccinated against hepatitis A

Mother to infant transmission:

- ◆ There is a small risk (5% - 6%) of transmission to newborn at birth
 - Post-exposure prophylaxis not available
 - Co-infection with HIV increases risk to 17%
- ◆ Infants born to HCV-positive women should be tested at 18 months of age or after

Make referrals and provide support

- ◆ Additional lab testing & medical referrals are needed
- ◆ Support group services (there are several HCV Support groups and resources available in Georgia – Please refer to the *Hep C Handbook* “A resource guide for Georgians”)
- ◆ Vaccinate against Hepatitis A and/or B if needed

Hepatitis C support groups

Support group information changes frequently. Before attending, please contact the individual listed to confirm time, date, and location. A list of support groups can also be found on the following websites:

GA chapter of the American Liver Foundation website: www.liverfoundation.org/georgia

→ click on “support groups”

The Hepatitis C Support Project: <http://www.hcvadvocate.org/> → scroll down and click on “support groups” on the right, select Georgia as your state, and click on “search”

Augusta, Georgia / Richmond County

Meets 4th Monday of each month; 12:00 Noon to 1:00 p.m.

VA Hospital, 950 15th Street, 4D Conference Room, Augusta, GA 30901 (Specialty Care #25)

Phone:706-733-0188 x 3844

Contact Angela Hardy, RN, MSN ([706-733-0188 x 3844](tel:706-733-0188)) for more information.

Austell, Georgia / Cobb County

Meets 1st Thursday of each month; 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Wellstar Cobb Medical Center, Auditorium 1, 3950 Austell Road, Austell, GA 30106

Phone:770-819-0022

Contact Elizabeth Coombs ([770-819-0022](tel:770-819-0022)) for more information.

Awareness Matters Support Group

Meets 1st Tuesday of each month; 7pm - 9pm

3000 Palmyra Rd., Albany, GA 31707

Phone:(229) 434-2000

Contact TJ Ruley (TJRuley@netzero.com) for more information.

Option Care of Camilla GA - Katie or Cara at 1-800-282-9345

H.E.A.L.S. Hepatitis C Support Group / Cherokee County

Meets 3rd Tuesday of every month; 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Woodstock Community Church - 8534 Main Street, Woodstock, GA 30188

Phone:770-926-8535 (Dee)

For more information, contact Dee Lemmon (770-926-8535)

Frankie Lynn (770-720-8258)

Pam Langford (850-443-8029)

Email: dee0987@aol.com or figment@nettally.com

Tucker / Gwinnett

Meets 1st Thursday of each month; 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

First United Methodist Church of Tucker, Room 203, 5095 LaVista Road, Tucker, GA 30084

Phone:404-633-9169

Contact Georgia Chapter Office (georgia@liverfoundation.org) for more information.

Contact Chapter office at above number or toll-free outside Atlanta / inside Georgia at 1-866 GA LIVER.

State Substance Abuse Agency

Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities & Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD)

Department of Human Resources

2 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 22-224

Atlanta, GA 30303

Phone: 404-657-2168

Public Information: 404-657-2272

Internet: www2.state.ga.us/departments/dhr/mhmrsa/index.html

Other Drug Treatment Services

Atlanta Harm Reduction Center (AHRC)

1561 McLendon Avenue NE

Atlanta, GA 30307

404-526-9222

Able to provide information about methadone, how methadone interacts with HIV and hepatitis C medications, new alternative medications like Subutex for opiate users, and programs for people seeking abstinence treatment for heroin use.

AHRC also provides injection drug users with tools, supplies, and information to stay safer while using and can help you access medical, drug treatment and social services. All services are free, anonymous, and offered with respect for you and your choices.

Drug Help Lines

National Help-Line Drug Treatment and Referral
800-662-4357

Georgia Drug Help-Line
800-338-6745

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Crisis Line
866-821-0465

Atlanta Harm Reduction Center
404-526-9222

Self- Help Groups – 12 Step Recovery Programs

Phone numbers for local 12 Step programs can also be found in the phone book.

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services
(212) 870-3400
<http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org/>

Cocaine Anonymous World Services
(800) 347-8998
<http://www.ca.org/>

Narcotics Anonymous World Service Office
(818) 780-3951 and <http://www.wsoinc.com/>

Dual Recovery Anonymous
(913) 676-7226

Al-Anon Family Groups
(800) 356-9996 and <http://www.Al-Anon-Alateen.org/>

Nar-Anon Family Groups
(213) 547-5800

Substance Use Management

Mylifeboat.com

Mylifeboat.com is a site for people who want to change their use of alcohol or drugs. You may want to stop using a substance altogether because of the trouble it causes you or you may want to change the WAY you drink or use drugs so that you can control it rather than it controlling you. You may be using a drug and you don't want to stop using but are interested in how you can reduce the harm it is doing to your health. This site is based on the idea that people use substances to cope with their lives. You do not have a disease. You do not have a character defect. It uses the stages of change and tips to help you move forward.

The Atlanta Harm Reduction Center

1561 McLendon Ave NE

Atlanta GA 30307

(404) 526-9222

www.atlantaharmreduction.org

AHRC staff can help you take a look at your reasons for using drugs, help you get clear on how they are impacting your life and their role in your life, and encourage you to make and create your own goals around substance use.

Recovery Café

188 South Milledge Avenue

Athens, GA 30604

Telephone: 706.369.0970

Fax: 706.353.1943

General Info: info@recoverycafe.com

Psychotherapy, drug use counseling (all models/goals okay!)

Websites

The Hepatitis C Support Project

<http://www.hcvadvocate.org/>

Hepatitis C Harm Reduction Project

<http://www.hepcproject.org/>

The Harm Reduction Coalition

<http://www.harmreduction.org/>

Clinical Trials

Information about clinical trials changes frequently and quickly becomes outdated. Most government-sponsored clinical trials are located at NIH in Maryland; however, clinical trials are sometimes available in Georgia or the Southeast. If interested in clinical trials, it is recommended that you visit the following websites on a regular basis to watch for new postings.

Center Watch Clinical Trials Listing Service

The site is designed to be an open resource for patients interested in participating in clinical trials and for research professionals.
www.centerwatch.com

Veritas Medicine

A free, confidential resource providing access to clinical trials and information on treatment options
www.veritasmedicine.com

Clinical Trials.gov (a service of the National Institutes of Health)

Provides regularly updated information about federally and privately supported clinical research in human volunteers. The website gives information about a trial's purpose, who may participate, locations, and phone numbers for more details.
www.clinicaltrials.gov

Emory Mind Body Program

The Emory University Mind-Body Program is committed to understanding the side effects associated with interferon-alpha treatment for hepatitis C. This website gives information about current clinical trials at Emory University.
<http://mindbody.psychiatry.emory.edu>



Hepatitis C Assessment Form

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ County: _____
 Phone: _____ DOB (mm/dd/yyyy): _____ Age: _____
 Gender: M F Race: W B Asian/PI American Indian/Alaskan Native other unknown
 Ethnicity: Hispanic Non-Hispanic

Test and vaccination history (check all that apply)

1. Have you ever been told that you tested positive for hepatitis? Yes No unknown
 If yes, what kind? A B C other unknown

2. Have you ever received the hepatitis A? Yes No unknown
 If yes, how many doses? 1 2 unknown

3. Have you ever received the hepatitis B? Yes No unknown
 If yes, how many doses? 1 2 3 unknown

4. Have you ever received the combination hepatitis A/B (Twinrix) vaccine? Yes No unknown
 If yes, how many doses? 1 2 3 unknown

Risk Exposures (CDC defined high risk groups for HCV infection)

1. Have you ever injected drugs, even once? Yes No unknown
 If yes, have you ever shared needles with others? Yes No unknown

2. Have you ever snorted drugs? Yes No unknown

3. Have you ever received a blood transfusion or organ transplant? Yes No unknown
 If yes, was it before July 1992? Yes No unknown

4. Have you ever received clotting factor (s) made before 1987? Yes No unknown

5. Have you ever been on hemodialysis (kidney machine)? Yes No unknown

6. Have you ever been told by any physician that you have liver disease or abnormal liver enzymes?
 Yes No unknown

7. Have you ever been notified that you received blood, blood components or organs from a donor who later tested positive for hepatitis C?
 Yes No unknown

Other risk factors (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> History of incarceration (prison/jail)	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple tattoos or body piercing not done in a professional shop
<input type="checkbox"/> Household contact of a person with hepatitis C	<input type="checkbox"/> Long term sexual partner of a person with hepatitis C
<input type="checkbox"/> Born to a mother with hepatitis C	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple sexual partners
<input type="checkbox"/> Sex for money or drugs	<input type="checkbox"/> Diagnosis of sexually transmitted diseases

Interviewer's name: _____ Date: _____ County: _____

Clinic site: HIV/AIDS Family Planning STD



Hepatitis C Post-Test Counseling Form

Client name: _____

DOB: _____

Risk assessment date: _____

Counselor name: _____

Post-test counseling date: _____

Counselor name: _____

Clinic Site: _____

Test results: positive negative

Reviewed post-test counseling information with client? Yes No

Client referred for medical evaluation? Yes No

Client referred to drug/alcohol treatment/rehabilitation? Yes No N/A

Client offered hepatitis A vaccine? Yes No N/A

If No or N/A, why? Already vaccinated Patient declined vaccine other _____
 Patient had disease in the past

Client offered hepatitis B vaccine? Yes No N/A

If No or N/A, why? Already vaccinated Patient declined vaccine other _____
 Patient had disease in the past or has chronic infection

Provided client with written hepatitis C information? Yes No