

What Can I Do?

Hepatitis C is a blood-borne virus, which affects the Liver. Liver damage occurs gradually over many years. Depending on the individual this damage can range from mild with little or no symptoms experienced, to severe with severe symptoms.

If you've answered "YES" to one or more questions contact the Hepatitis Council of WA (Inc) for information about the virus and how you get hepatitis C. Information is also available about antibody testing for hepatitis C, and how you can avoid passing the virus on to someone else.

See your doctor for a health checkup. If you are thinking about getting tested it is your right to be counselled before and after testing so that you understand the consequences of a positive or a negative test result.

Help is available if you need to change your lifestyle or reduce your chances of getting or spreading hepatitis C. Contact the Hepatitis Council of WA (Inc) for information about the support available in your area.

Where to Get Help & Information

The Hepatitis Council of WA (Inc) is a non government organisation, providing information, support, referral and pre and post test discussions. One to one support/counseling is available for people infected with or affected by (partners, family etc.) hepatitis C. Educational sessions are available for businesses and community groups.

Telephone Information & Support
(9am - 5pm Monday to Friday)
(08) 9328 8538 Metro;
1800 800 070 Country;
or Email: info@hepatitiswa.com.au
Web site: www.hepatitiswa.com.au

For further information, contact your local doctor.

Information and advice is also available from:
ADIS (Alcohol and Drug Information Service) on
(08) 9442 5000; 1800 198 024 Country.
WASUA (Western Australian Substance Users
Association Inc) on (08) 9227 7866.

Other Brochures:

Hepatitis C & Your Liver

Getting Tested for Hepatitis C: Pre-Test Information

HEP-

C

Could You Have Hepatitis C?

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Hepatitis Council of Western Australia



INFORMATION & SUPPORT

Metro 9328 8538
Country 1800 800 070

Are You At Risk?

You may not even realise that you have been exposed to hepatitis C. Therefore, it's important for you to identify your risk factors, those things that make it likely that you have been infected.

This is a checklist to help you decide whether you are at risk of being infected with hepatitis C. Put a tick if you can answer "YES" to a question.

A "YES" answer indicates a possible risk to yourself and others.

Social

- Have you shared a razor, toothbrush or sharp grooming item (eg nail file) that belongs to someone who has hepatitis C?
- Have you taken part in a ritual that involved blood?
- Have you ever been in prison?

Medical

- Have you had a blood transfusion or been given blood products in Australia before February 1990?
- Have you had a blood transfusion or been given blood products in another country?
- Have you had an organ transplant in Australia before 1990?
- Have you had an organ transplant in another country?
- Were you immunised against a disease in an overseas country? If so, was the same needle and syringe used to give injections to groups of people?

Personal

- Have you ever injected drugs and shared injecting equipment (even if you injected just once in your life or many years ago)?
- Do you have a tattoo that was done with shared or used equipment (including ink pots)?
- Have you had body piercing done with shared equipment?

Work-related

- Have you ever been injured with a sharp instrument or needle at work?
- Has another person's blood been in contact with your own through injury or tending to someone who has been injured?
- Have you ever handled blood stained items such as wound dressings, tissues, or bloody cloths whilst not wearing protective clothing (eg gloves)?

Blood

◆ HCV antibody (anti-HCV)

Detects whether a person has been exposed to the virus. If a person has been exposed it can take up to six months for antibodies to be detected.

◆ HCV RNA (by PCR - Polymerase Chain Reaction tests)

HCV RNA (Qualitative by PCR)
Detects presence (or absence) of the hepatitis C virus RNA in the blood.

HCV RNA viral load (Quantitative)
Determines the amount of the virus circulating in the blood.

Other Tests:
HCV Genotype
Identifies the dominant genotype.

Both genotype and viral load are important for predicting response and optimal duration of treatment.

