

# THE AAOHN COMMUNITY CARES ABOUT HEPATITIS C

## HCV Outreach Project, funded by the National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR)

### Frequently Asked Questions for Occupational Health Nurses

1. I have many questions about HCV and who should be screened for HCV. Where can I get my questions answered?
  - The CDC updates a FAQ for health professionals: <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/hcvfaq.htm>
  - Here is a list of who should be screened for HCV: <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/guidelinesc.htm>
2. Why should I conduct screening for HCV in my worksite?
  - The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends a one-time screening for all persons born between 1945-1965. 75% of identified HCV is in baby boomers.
  - Current medication regimens have a 95% cure rate after 2-3 months of treatment. These drug regimens have very few side effects.
  - HCV, if left undiagnosed and untreated, is associated with mortality from liver cirrhosis and hepatocellular cancer.
  - Take the 5-minute CDC risk assessment for viral Hepatitis to see if you should be tested: <https://www2a.cdc.gov/hepatitis/RiskAssessment/start.html>
  - You may want to use this screening tool with your employees.
3. I work in the healthcare industry. Has the guidance been updated for BBP exposure to HCV?
  - Yes, in February 2017, the CDC updated the post-exposure guidance to HCV exposure in occupational settings: <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/pdfs/testing-followup-exposed-hc-personnel.pdf>
4. Where can I go to make sure I am up-to-date on HCV management?
  - The Clinician Consultation Center has up-to-date consultation for clinicians: <http://nccc.ucsf.edu/>
  - 24 hour Post-Exposure Prophylaxis consultation (PEP-line): <http://nccc.ucsf.edu/clinician-consultation/pep-post-exposure-prophylaxis/>
  - The American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases and the Infectious Diseases Society of America publishes HCV guidelines for diagnosis and treatment: <http://www.hcvguidelines.org/>
5. I heard that those with Hepatitis C may not need a liver biopsy. Is this true?
  - Yes, most cases of chronic hepatitis C do not need a liver biopsy. Fibroscan technology can assess the liver for stiffness/fibrosis.

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6. How should I interpret HCV laboratory tests?
  - [https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/pdfs/hcv\\_graph.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/pdfs/hcv_graph.pdf)
7. Where can I refer my employees with HCV to the best care?
  - Project Echo is available for community primary care providers to seek consultation with hepatitis C experts. <https://echo.unm.edu/nm-teleecho-clinics/hepatitis-c-community-clinic/>
  - Persons with HCV can contact Help 4 Hep peer to peer counseling for free of charge consultation: <http://www.help4hep.org/>
8. Our employees, dependents and retirees may not have adequate pharmacy coverage. Where can I refer them for Patient Assistance?
  - <http://nvhr.org/content/patient-resources#patient>
9. Our worksite has an ethnically and racially diverse workforce. Where can I go for culturally tailored educational materials?
  - NVHR has links for Latinos, African Americans and Native Americans: <http://nvhr.org/content/patient-resources#clinical>
10. Our clinic electronic medical record does not currently have a prompt for HCV screening.
  - Where can I go for guidance on adding this prompt? <http://nvhr.org/EMR>
11. July 28<sup>th</sup> is World Hepatitis Day-where can I access planning materials to plan a worksite event?
  - The CDC shares their materials, and links to the WHO materials: <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/worldhepdayresources.htm>
  - NVHR has community coalition building materials: <http://nvhr.org/content/community-partner-activities-and-resources>
12. Is HCV protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?
  - Hepatitis C may be a qualified disability under the ADA.
    - The ADA does not contain a list of medical conditions that constitute disabilities. Instead, the ADA has a general definition of disability that each person must meet (EEOC Regulations . . . , 2011). Therefore, some people with hepatitis will have a disability under the ADA and some will not. For explanation of a disability, visit: <https://askian.org/corner/vol05iss04.htm>
  - HCV treatment with direct acting antiviral medications, with shorter treatment times, reduces the need for work restrictions or short term disability.
  - One resource for work considerations for a hepatitis diagnosis, although this resource may not have been updated since DAAs medications have been available for HCV treatment: <https://askian.org/media/downloads/HepatitisA&CSeries.pdf>

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13. Should I recommend that my employee share their hepatitis C status with their supervisor?

- No, it is not necessary for an employee to share their hepatitis C status with their supervisor. An employee has the right to keep personal medical information confidential. The employer only needs to know what work restrictions or accommodations are required for the employee. See: <http://aaohn.org/page/position-statements> (AAOHN Position Statement: Confidentiality of Worker Health Information, 2015) and [https://www.acoem.org/Confidentiality\\_Medical\\_Information.aspx](https://www.acoem.org/Confidentiality_Medical_Information.aspx)
- Potential discrimination and stigma associated with hepatitis C may be a barrier for individuals seeking treatment. It is important to protect confidentiality and support access to care and treatment. See: <http://aaohn.org/page/position-statements> (AAOHN Position Statement: Confidentiality of Worker Health Information, 2015) and [https://www.acoem.org/Confidentiality\\_Medical\\_Information.aspx](https://www.acoem.org/Confidentiality_Medical_Information.aspx)