

## Dramatic increases in hepatitis C CDC now recommends hepatitis C testing for all adults



Want to learn more?  
[www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/)

### 4 in 10

About 4 in 10 people with hepatitis C do not know they are infected.

### 4x

New hepatitis C cases are 4 times as high as they were 10 years ago.

### 20–39

Younger adults 20–39 years old have the highest rates of new hepatitis C cases.

## Overview:

Hepatitis C is increasing dramatically in the United States, particularly among younger adults, and 4 in 10 people don't even know they have it. Hepatitis C is usually spread through blood, often from injection drug use. Less commonly, hepatitis C is spread through sex or from an infected mother to her infant during pregnancy or childbirth. An acute infection develops when someone is first infected. Some people clear the virus, but most people with acute hepatitis C will develop a long-term (chronic) infection. Left untreated, chronic hepatitis C can cause severe liver damage, liver cancer, and even death. But hepatitis C is curable. The first step to being cured is getting a hepatitis C blood test. CDC now recommends testing:

- Every adult **at least once**
- Pregnant women during **every pregnancy**
- Everyone with ongoing risk factors **regularly**



## PROBLEM:

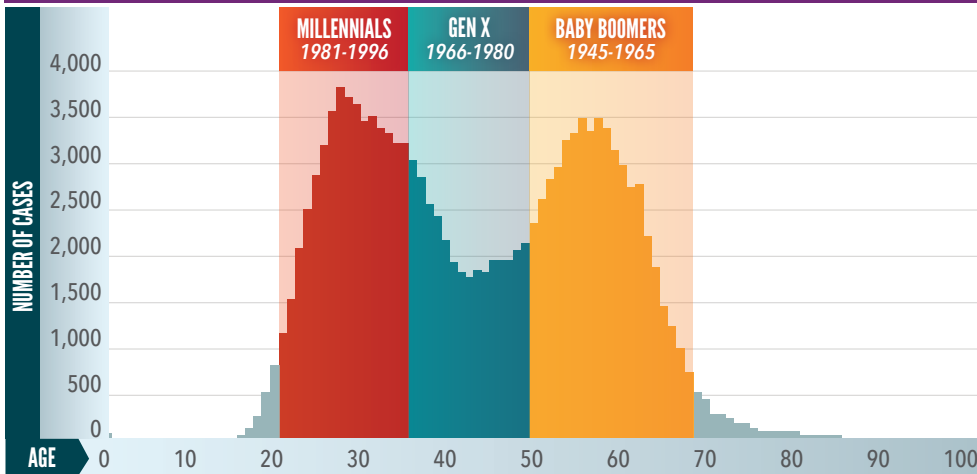
## Multiple generations are at risk for hepatitis C

- The percent of newly reported chronic infections in 2018 was equal among Baby Boomers (born 1945–1965) and Millennials (born 1981–1996), both around 36%, while Generation X (born 1966–1980) made up 23%.
- Increasing rates of acute hepatitis C among people of reproductive age are putting even younger generations at risk.



**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
National Center for HIV/AIDS,  
Viral Hepatitis, STD, and  
TB Prevention

# New Reports of Chronic Hepatitis C High in Multiple Generations



SOURCE: National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System, 2018

# THE WAY FORWARD

## HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS CAN:

- Test every adult once and pregnant women during every pregnancy.
- Test everyone with risk factors; test regularly if risk continues.
- Provide hepatitis C care and cure or refer to a specialist.

## HEALTH DEPARTMENTS CAN:

- Implement screening recommendations.
- Monitor and report the local burden of hepatitis C.
- Support comprehensive syringe services programs to increase access to hepatitis C testing.

## PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS CAN:

- Seek treatment for substance use disorders (SAMHSA's National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP).
- Use new syringes and equipment with every injection.
- Get tested for hepatitis C regularly.

## PEOPLE WITH HEPATITIS C CAN:

- Get treated. Get cured.
- Avoid alcohol and adopt other health behaviors that support liver health.

## EVERYONE CAN:

- Get tested at least once and learn how to prevent hepatitis C.

## WHO SHOULD GET TESTED FOR HEPATITIS C?

### EVERY ADULT



At least once

### EVERY PREGNANT WOMAN



Every pregnancy

### EVERYONE WITH RISK FACTORS



Regularly

SOURCE: CDC Recommendations for Hepatitis C Screening, MMWR, April 2020

## Get tested. Get cured.



- CDC now recommends one-time screening of all adults 18 years and older and screening all pregnant women during every pregnancy.
- People with risk factors, including people who inject drugs, should be tested regularly.
- All people with hepatitis C should be provided access to care and treatment.

### For more information

1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 | Web: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30333

Publication date: April 9, 2020