

Help4HepBC



1-888-411-7578

Hepatitis C 101 and Help-4-Hep BC



BC Community Response Network
Provincial Learning Event
January 15 2019



Our vision

BC free from new hepatitis C infections, with the best possible care and support for those already infected.

Our mission

To strengthen the capacity of individuals and organizations throughout British Columbia in order to prevent new hepatitis C infections and improve the health and treatment outcomes of people already living with hepatitis C.

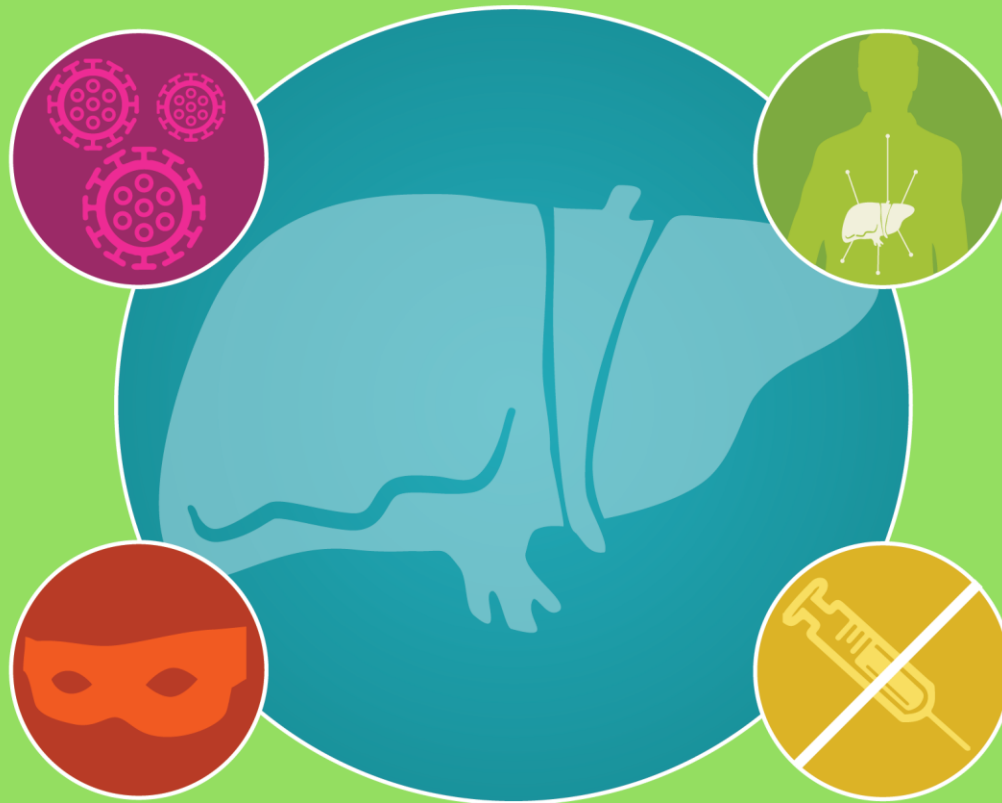
Hep C 101

- ▶ Hep C is the hepatitis C virus (HCV)
- ▶ 6 different genotypes
- ▶ Causes damage to liver over time
- ▶ You can have hep C and not know it
- ▶ People can feel unwell even if liver tests look fine
- ▶ People can feel ok and have liver damage

DID YOU KNOW?

HEPATITIS C IS A VIRUS THAT CAUSES DAMAGE TO THE LIVER.

SILENT KILLER:
OFTEN NO SYMPTOMS FOR DECADES



THE LIVER DOES OVER 500 JOBS FOR THE BODY

HAS NO VACCINE

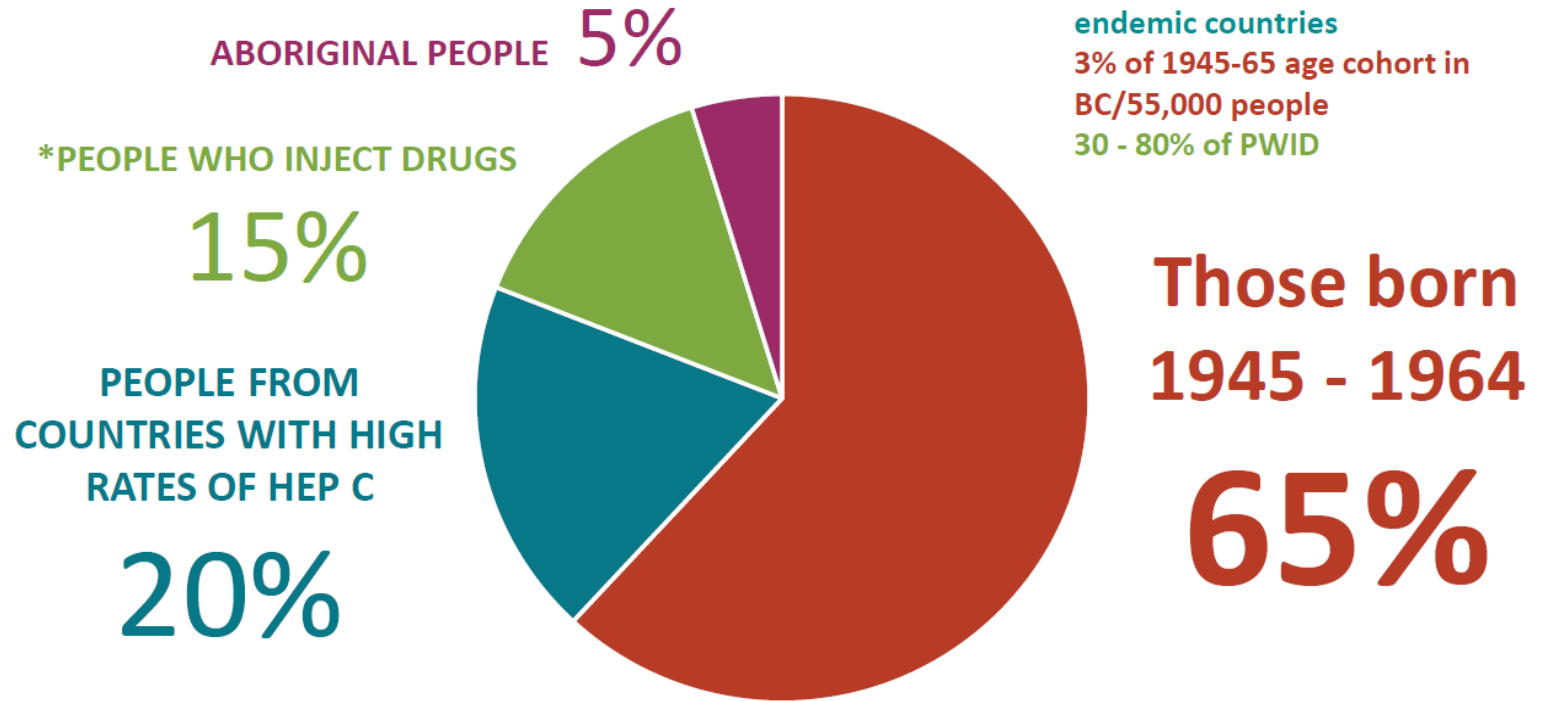
Testing is the only way to find out for sure if you have hep C.

The 2 tests you need:

1. **HCV antibody test** detects antibodies to the hep C virus
 - ▶ You will have the antibodies for life
 - ▶ You can get re-infected
2. **HCV RNA test** finds out if you still have the virus
 - ▶ 20 - 25% 'clear the virus' on their own, without treatment
 - ▶ If have cleared the virus, will have a negative HCV RNA test result
 - ▶ Chronic hepatitis C (CHC) infection is when the virus is present longer than 6 months.
 - ▶ CHC requires treatment to clear (cure)

Who has hep C in BC?

Four populations most affected:



* People who inject drugs have the highest annual incidence rates of hepatitis C in BC. This percentage is based on conservative, low-end estimates of the size of this population in BC. The Provincial Population Size project places estimates up to more than twice this number.

Hep C is passed blood-blood

Main ways hep C gets in to the body:

Re-using drug use equipment

Re-using medical equipment meant to be used once and improper sterilization of equipment

Re-using tattoo and piercing equipment

Getting a blood transfusion or organ transplant that was not screened for hepatitis C.

In Canada, donated blood has been screened for Hepatitis C since 1990. In some other countries, blood was not able to be screened until more recently.

Less likely ways for hep C to get in to the body:

Sharing or borrowing personal care items that could have blood on them like toothbrushes, nail clippers and razors

Unprotected sex (esp. anal sex) where blood is present and if a person has HIV or an STI

How hep C is passed along

Less than 1% of partners of HCV+ people become infected with hep C (over lifetime).

It's a cure!

- ▶ Pill form
- ▶ Usually few side effects
- ▶ 8 - 12 weeks usually
- ▶ Over 9 out of 10 people who take treatment are cured
- ▶ Available through BC PharmaCare
- ▶ No restrictions to accessing treatment through BC PharmaCare

Hep C Treatment

Comparing hep A, B + C

Hep A

- Acute only, 100% clear on own
- Fecal-oral (not washing hands after using bathroom)
- Vaccine available
- Most have few or no symptoms
- No treatment

Hep B

- 85% clear on own, 25% have virus for life
- Body fluids and blood
- Vaccine available
- Treatment available (lifelong)

Hep C

- 20-25% clear on their own; 75-80% have virus for life
- Blood
- No vaccine
- Treatment available (cure)

Help4HepBC



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Peer support for people living with or wanting to know more about hep C

- ▶ Help4Hep BC, PHCN's toll-free, confidential and safe **peer-to-peer helpline**.
- ▶ Along with people living with hep C, the helpline serves anyone else wanting to know more can call the helpline



- ▶ Opened May 2017.
- ▶ Funded by Provincial Health Services Authority.
- ▶ Uses secure call telephone and client management systems.
- ▶ Receives calls from people in BC and other provinces/territories.



- ▶ Peer navigators listen, support, answer questions and provide resources.
- ▶ A person can make as many calls as needed, and
- ▶ A person can also call just once and never again.



Help4Hep BC Helpline - referrals and information

Peer Navigators have access to a database of resources and services around the province (housed in ICarol):

- ▶ Clinics- stand alone or in hospital settings
- ▶ Specialists
- ▶ Counselors
- ▶ Community-based services and supports

Peer Navigators provide contact information for resources to callers



Our Peer Navigators

Laurel Gloslee Laurel is experiential both as a person who used drugs and someone with hep C. She treated 3 times before finally curing her hep C in 2015) She works for AIDS Vancouver Island, first in Victoria and now in Campbell River. For Laurel's full story go [here](#).

Daryl Luster Daryl has 5 years experience as a Peer Navigator on the US Help4Hep helpline, as well as countless hours supporting people in BC to access care and treatment for their hep C. Daryl coordinates the Help4Hep BC helpline, including training, supervising and mentoring Peer Navigators.



Testimonials



Testimonial



When I heard my Doctor say I had Hepatitis C, I was very scared. My GP said little about it and I now know he knew very little as well. Of course I 'Googled' it at home and got more scared.

Calling the helpline was the best thing that could have happened to me then. The peer navigator was very knowledgeable and spent a long time listening and answering questions and giving solid advice that worked. It greatly alleviated my fear.

I got treated right away because of his clinic recommendations.

The helpline is an invaluable resource for anyone diagnosed with Hep C or caring for a person with Hepatitis. Speaking with people who have lived experiences with Hepatitis and medication is so important. So needed. Thank you for listening,

Testimonial



I started using the Pacific Hep C Helpline when I was first diagnosed with Hep C.

The Helpline counselor really kept me on track in seeking a specialist and getting my tests done. *I think the first thing was she gave me was hope.* She had been thru this and knew what I felt like. I had help in dealing with my family about it- my daughter was so worried and upset!

This was a very unhappy chapter in my life and my wonderful counselor made such a difference, just knowing I could call her took away my feelings of helplessness and anxiety.

Do I need to say that I was undetected after 3 months off treatment and I am now able to walk without a walker and get back into my old life!

Thank you Helpline!



Contacts and Resources

▶ help4hepbcc.ca 1 888-411-7578

▶ Posters and postcards: <http://www.help4hepbcc.ca/download-materials/>

▶ Hep C treatment information: <http://www.hepctip.ca/>

▶ CATIE <https://catie.ca/en/hepatitis-c>

▶ EduCATIE "Hepatitis C Basics": <http://www.educatie.ca/>

For inquiries about PHCN please be in touch!

▶ Daryl Luster daryl@pacifichep.org 604 817 3028

▶ Deb Schmitz deb@pacifichepc.org 604 740 1092