



# Viral Hepatitis Newsletter

November 2023

## Spotlight



### Giving Thanks

As we approach the holiday season, and are thinking of things we are thankful for, we at the Indiana Department of Health want to say thank you for subscribing to the Viral Hepatitis Newsletter. This newsletter aims to provide relevant and up-to-date information around the topic of viral hepatitis. We appreciate you tuning in and helping our work toward educating the public and ending viral hepatitis by 2030. If you have any questions or would like to have a feature in an upcoming issue of the Viral Hepatitis Newsletter please reach out to Roxanne Krepper at [RKrepper@health.in.gov](mailto:RKrepper@health.in.gov).

To enroll in the viral hepatitis newsletter or to see archived issues of the Viral Hepatitis Newsletter, [CLICK THIS LINK](#)

## Hepatitis and the Holidays

### Hepatitis C Treatment

The advancement in hepatitis C care is something to be thankful about. In the 1970s hepatitis C was an unknown virus called non-A, non-B hepatitis, however by 1989 the virus was identified and named hepatitis C. The identification of hepatitis C virus started the momentum toward development of the hepatitis C antibody test, and then the creation of hepatitis C treatment regimens, the first being Interferon in the 1990s and then in 2011 the creation of Direct Acting Antiviral (DAA) medications for treating hepatitis C. The current DAA medications for treating hepatitis C are the safest and most effective way to treat hepatitis C, boasting a 90% clearance rate.

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As many as

# 75%

of those living with chronic hepatitis C virus are unaware they are infected.

According to the [American Liver Foundation](#)

### Healthy Families

As we approach the holiday season and are getting together with family and friends, let's find time to talk about health and health history with those we care about. Talk to your family about being proactive about their health and regularly seeing a doctor. Hepatitis screening and testing is recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention for everyone age 18 and older and pregnant people during each pregnancy, those who have risk factors should get screened periodically as the risk factors continue to persist.

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### No Room for Stigma at the Table

Stigma is a set of negative and unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something or someone.

Here are some things you can do to reduce the stigma:

- Educate yourself on the topic.
- Be aware of your attitude and behaviors and consider what judgmental thinking you might have.
- Think before you speak. The tone and words you chose to use can affect others.
- Educate others, pass on facts, challenge stereotypes and mistruths.
- Treat everyone with respect.



## UNITE Against Substance Use Disorder Stigma ECHO

The UNITE Against SUD Stigma series is designed for medical professionals and first responders to break down stigma for individuals with substance use disorder. UNITE focuses on:

**Uncovering bias, Noticing stigmatizing language, Identifying and sharing resources, Taking time to recharge, and Empathizing and Empowering others.**

UNITE Against SUD Stigma ECHO: A special series.

Dates: Tuesday, Nov. 28, and Dec. 12

Time: Noon—1 p.m. EST

To register: <https://redcap.link/MCPHDECHO>

For more information: <https://fsph.iupui.edu/research-centers/centers/ECHO/echo-programs/mcphd-echo-series.html>

**Past UNITE recordings can be viewed online [here](#). Viewers are eligible to obtain continuing education credits upon watching full session recordings and completing the accompanying post-test activity.**

## New Testing Recommendations

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently published updated testing recommendations for infants perinatally exposed to hepatitis C which includes:

- Perinatally exposed infants should receive a NAT for HCV RNA at age 2–6 months to identify children in whom chronic HCV infection might develop if not treated
- Infants with detectable HCV RNA should be managed in consultation with a health care provider with expertise in pediatric hepatitis C management.
- Infants with an undetectable HCV RNA result do not require further follow-up unless clinically warranted.
- Infants and children aged 7–17 months who are perinatally exposed to HCV and have not previously been tested should receive a NAT for HCV RNA.

Children aged ≥18 months who are perinatally exposed to HCV and have not previously been tested should receive an anti-HCV test with reflex to NAT for HCV RNA

The full recommendations can be found on the CDC website. Additionally, background and reasoning for the updated recommendations are further explained in a recent MMWR Report Hepatitis C Testing Among Perinatally Exposed Infants and Children — United States, 2023

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To **promote, protect, and improve** the health and safety of all Hoosiers

