**Possible hepatitis services provided in prison or jails**

In prison or jail, you may have access to medical services for hepatitis. Ask your doctors and nurses about what’s available. Remember, every prison and jail is different, meaning some services may not be available.

**Hepatitis C Testing:**

There are two parts to an HCV test: an antibody test is usually done first and it only checks for exposure to the virus. The second test is called an HCV RNA test, and it confirms whether or not you currently have the hepatitis C virus.

**Vaccines for Hepatitis A and B:**

Getting vaccinated prevents you from getting a virus even if you are exposed. You can’t be vaccinated for hepatitis C, but you can be vaccinated against hepatitis A and hepatitis B. For people with hepatitis C, it’s very important to be vaccinated against hepatitis A and B.

**Monitoring your Liver:**

There are tests to see how your liver is doing. Some of these include enzyme tests, liver panels, and biopsy. Ask your facility what they might offer.

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**Be Safe. Be Healthy.**

*Learn as much as you can about hepatitis C.*

*If you need resources or more information you can write to:*

The National Hepatitis Corrections Network
911 Western Ave, Suite 302, Seattle, WA 98104
### What is hepatitis C (HCV)?
Hepatitis C is a virus that can hurt your liver and is mainly spread through infected blood. Many people do not get sick from HCV, but others get severe liver scarring called cirrhosis. HCV is curable.

### If I’m incarcerated, am I at risk?
Many incarcerated people are living with HCV: an average of 17% of people in prison or jail in the United States have HCV, but only about 1% of people who aren’t in prison or jail have HCV.

### How do I get hepatitis C (HCV)?
You get HCV when the blood of someone who has HCV gets into your body through an open cut or an open sore.

#### Easiest ways to get hepatitis C (HCV):
- **Sharing** needles, cookers, cottons, water and other injection drug equipment
  - Important note: Boiling, burning, or rinsing needles with water or bleach does NOT fully protect against HCV transmission!
- **Sharing** tattoo needles, tattoo ink, tattoo guns, or piercing equipment
- **Blood transfusions** that occurred before 1992

#### Other ways to get hepatitis C (HCV):
- **Sharing** straws or dollars for snorting drugs
- **Sharing** hygiene equipment such as razors, toothbrushes, and clippers
- **Getting into fights**
- **Unsafe or rough sexual activity**
- **Blood spills** that are not well cleaned

**It is NOT possible to get hepatitis C (HCV) by:**
- Casual contact such as hugging, kissing, or sharing food or drinks
- Simply living in a cell or unit with others
- Eating or drinking in the chow hall
- Sharing a toilet or shower
- Playing sports in the yard or gym

### Here are some important things to know about HCV treatment if you’re in prison or jail:
- Hepatitis C is treatable and in most cases is curable.
- Many new medications have recently been released to treat HCV.
- Prisons are unable to treat everyone with HCV, but not everyone with hepatitis C needs treatment right away.
- Treatment is complicated, and doctors think about many things to help you decide when treatment is right for you.
- Prisons will usually consider how long your sentence is to make sure you will be in prison long enough to finish treatment.
  - Jails usually don’t treat HCV.

### What if I can’t get treated while I’m locked up?
In prison or jail there may be limitations on hepatitis C treatment. Remember, not everyone with HCV needs treatment right away. There are many reasons why doctors might not suggest treatment now.

If you have been told that you are not eligible for hepatitis C treatment, ask questions so that you understand why it is being denied or delayed. If you think that you should be treated or you are not getting treatment that you feel is necessary, follow procedures at your facility to get more answers.

**Remember! There are ways to stay healthy with HCV.**

#### Things you can do:
- See your prison health provider often
- Get vaccinated for hepatitis A and B
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Learn as much as you can about HCV

#### Things not to do:
- Drink alcohol
- Use drugs
- Take too much acetaminophen (Tylenol)