

IF YOU WORK IN AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE YOU MAY COME IN CONTACT WITH BLOOD, YOU NEED TO:

1. Treat all blood and body fluid as if they are infectious.
 - a. Avoid direct skin contact with blood
 - b. Wear protective gear when working around blood i.e. gloves, masks, etc.
2. Get vaccinated for hepatitis A and hepatitis B.
3. Follow your workplace exposure control plan.
4. Attend yearly infection control trainings.



RESOURCES



For more information on hepatitis C contact the following:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

CDC Hotline STD/AIDS
1-800-342-2437
1-800-344-7432 (Spanish)

www.cdc.gov/hepatitis

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Viral Hepatitis Program
(303) 692-2780

www.hepatitiscolorado.info

Hep C Connection

For confidential information about testing, vaccines, and treatment:

1325 South Colorado Boulevard, B-302
Denver, CO 80222

1-800-522-HEPC (4372)
Hepatitis HelpLine

www.hepc-connection.org

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

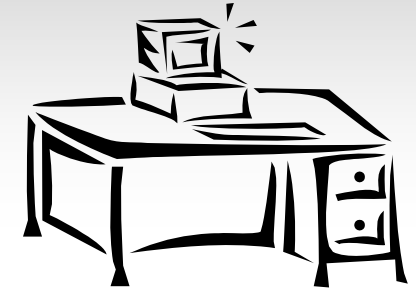
Regional Office, Denver
(303) 844-1600, ext. 314

www.osha.gov/SLTC/Bloodbornepathogens

Provided by Team Hep C, Denver, Colorado

**Contact: HEP C CONNECTION
1-800-522-HEPC (4372)**

**HEPATITIS C
IN THE WORKPLACE**



WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

Hepatitis C is an infection of the liver caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV). HCV is found in the blood of infected persons. It can damage the liver and lead to cirrhosis (scarring), chronic liver disease, and/or liver cancer.

HOW COMMON IS HEPATITIS C?

4 million people are believed to be infected in the United States. It causes 8,000-10,000 deaths per year. It is the leading cause of liver transplants.

HEPATITIS C IN THE WORKPLACE

Your chances of becoming infected in the workplace are low, but know your risks.

Employers and employees can reduce the risk of transmission by becoming educated about hepatitis C and its risks.



's Of Hepati-

There is a lot of confusion about the different types of hepatitis.

Here is a list of the ways that different types of hepatitis are spread:

HEPATITIS A

Transmitted by fecal/oral route through:

- Close person to person contact
- Oral sex
- Ingestion of food or water contaminated with infected feces

HEPATITIS B

Transmitted by contact with infected blood, semen, and vaginal fluid through:

- Unprotected sexual intercourse
- Injection drug use
- Human bites
- Infected mothers to babies at birth

HEPATITIS C

Transmitted when infected blood from one person enters the bloodstream of another person through:

- Sharing supplies to inject or snort drugs ("works" - syringes, straws, etc.)
- Blood transfusions and/or organ transplant before 1992
- Receiving clotting factor before 1987
- Long-term hemodialysis
- Workplace exposures with needles, sharps, or splashes to eyes, nose, and mouth
- Unprotected sexual intercourse
- Unsanitary tattoos and piercings

HEPATITIS C IS NOT EASILY SPREAD ON THE JOB

Hepatitis C is spread only through blood contact.

No cases of hepatitis have been linked to:

- hugging
- sneezing
- coughing
- sharing eating utensils or water glasses
- papers
- water fountains
- vehicles
- chewed pencils
- toilet seats
- eating facilities
- food or water
- casual contact
- computers
- telephones
- coffee pots
- bathrooms
- uniforms
- desks
- showers

SHOULD PEOPLE WITH HEPATITIS C BE ALLOWED TO WORK?

1. Thousands of persons who have been diagnosed with HCV are successfully employed.
2. Much like people with cancer or heart disease, people with HCV feel well enough to work at no risk to themselves and others.
3. People with HCV infection are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and any discrimination in the work place is prohibited.

!! DON'T DISCRIMINATE !!

According to the Centers for Disease Control: Persons should not be excluded from work, school, play, child-care, or other settings on the basis of their HCV infection status.

WHAT IF SOMEONE IS EXPOSED TO BLOOD IN THE WORKPLACE. . . .

In the workplace there is a risk of spreading the virus when a needle or other sharp object with infected blood enters the skin or blood splashes into the eyes, nose, mouth, onto broken skin, or into a cut.

1. Wash wound with soap and water
2. Flush mucous membranes, eyes, nose, with water
3. Follow exposure control plan
4. Notify your employer immediately
5. Seek medical care through worker's compensation provider within one to two hours



BLOOD CLEAN-UP

To clean blood spills on surfaces, tools, and equipment use OSHA-approved solutions as appropriate. Wear protective gear when cleaning blood spills, follow OSHA's guidelines for disposing of bloody materials or sharps.

THE HEPATITIS C VIRUS CAN LIVE OUTSIDE THE BODY FOR UP TO FOUR DAYS.

THERE IS NO VACCINE AVAILABLE TO PREVENT HEPATITIS C