

## NEW JERSEY AIDS/HIV/STD HOTLINE

### **PRESS RELEASE**

May 2016

## Hepatitis: Major Cause of Liver Cancer Get Tested

**(Newark, NJ)** – Chronic viral hepatitis is a serious illness with potentially devastating consequences, including liver failure and liver cancer, if left untreated. Millions of Americans are living with it and yet most don't know they are infected. Getting tested and knowing your status could save your life.

This month has been designated Hepatitis Awareness Month and May 19<sup>th</sup> has been designed Hepatitis Testing Day. It's possible for people to become ill decades after being infected with viral hepatitis; know the facts and get tested. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Viral Hepatitis is promoting two national campaigns in observance; [The Know More Hepatitis™](#) and [Know Hepatitis B™](#). The populations most at risk for Hepatitis B are Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. Baby boomers, those born between the years of 1945 and 1965, are at particularly high risk of Hepatitis C infection.

Below is CDC's list of four things you should know about hepatitis<sup>1</sup>

1. **Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C are all different diseases.**  
Each type of hepatitis is caused by a different virus and spread in different ways. [Hepatitis A](#) does not cause a long-term infection, although it can make people very sick. [Hepatitis B](#) and [Hepatitis C](#) can become chronic, life-long infections and lead to serious health problems.
2. **Chronic hepatitis is a leading cause of liver cancer.**  
Chronic hepatitis B and C can cause serious damage to the liver, including liver damage, cirrhosis, and even liver cancer. In fact, more than 60 percent of liver cancer cases are related to Hepatitis B or C.
3. **Most people with chronic hepatitis do not know they are infected.**  
More than five million Americans are living with chronic hepatitis in the United States, but most do not know they are infected. Many people live with chronic hepatitis for decades without symptoms or feeling sick.
4. **Getting tested could save your life.** Lifesaving treatments are available for chronic hepatitis B and new treatments are available that can cure Hepatitis C. Still, getting tested is the only way to know if you are infected. Take CDC's [Hepatitis Risk Assessment](#) to see if you should be tested for viral hepatitis.

### KNOW YOUR HEPATITIS STATUS – GET OUT & GET TESTED

Our staff (healthcare professionals at the New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline) and the CDC urge all Americans, including pregnant women, to get tested for hepatitis. A simple blood test is all that is needed to know if you are infected. If you are infected, we strongly urge you to seek medical care immediately. Early detection and treatment can make all the difference in living a long, healthy life. Those that are not infected should speak to their healthcare professionals about getting vaccinated to prevent getting the virus in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). [Hepatitis Testing Day – May 19](#). March 28, 2016.

For more information, questions, or concerns about hepatitis, as well as, HIV and other STIs, contact us either by phone at 1-800-624-2377, text/email at [8006242377@njpies.org](mailto:8006242377@njpies.org), or chat [www.njhivstdline.org](http://www.njhivstdline.org). Calls are free and confidential. Help is always available. Services are available 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week, every day of the year.

- Referrals for testing sites and other related services
- HIV/AIDS, STD and hepatitis prevention information
- HIV counseling and treatment locations
- HIV treatment information

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#### **New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline**

Healthcare professionals provide telephone consultation for people seeking information about HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases including hepatitis. Callers receive information tailored to their needs; discussion about prevention, referrals for testing sites and other related services, counseling and testing locations, and information on treatment and adverse reactions to medications. The hotline's services are provided by the staff at the hotline, nurses, pharmacists and physicians, administered by the New Jersey Poison Center and funded by the New Jersey Department of Health, Division of HIV, STD, and TB services.

#### **About Rutgers**

Established in 1766, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is America's eighth oldest institution of higher learning and one of the nation's premier public research universities. Serving more than 65,000 students on campuses, centers, institutes and other locations throughout the state, Rutgers is the only public university in New Jersey that is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities.

Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) is the health care education, research, and clinical division of Rutgers University, comprising nine schools and their attendant faculty practices, centers, institutes and clinics; New Jersey's leading comprehensive cancer care center; and New Jersey's largest behavioral health care network.

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