# Hepatitis C Virus

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## WHAT IS HCV?
- Liver infection caused by the Hepatitis C Virus
- Can last a few weeks to lifelong
- 130-150 million worldwide have chronic Hepatitis C
- 350,000-650,000 die each year from Hepatitis C-related liver disease
- No vaccine
- Can lead to:
  - Liver Cirrhosis
  - Chronic Kidney Disease
  - Cryoglobulinemic vasculitis
  - 10-15% of HCV-infected
  - Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma

## EPIDEMIOLOGY
- Number infected:
  - 3.5 million in USA
  - 130-150 million worldwide have chronic Hepatitis C
  - 50% don’t know they’re infected
  - 55-85% of those infected will get chronic Hepatitis C
  - Cirrhosis of the liver can occur within 20 yrs in 15-30% of those infected

## RISK FACTORS & PREVENTION
- Transmission from sharing blood of an infected person
- Needle sharing
- Blood transfusions (if unscreened)
- Inadequate sterilization of medical equipment
- Sexually
- Mother to baby

## DIAGNOSIS AND SCREENING
- Early diagnosis is rare because most patients don’t have symptoms when they get the infection
- Simple blood testing can reveal if you may have been exposed
- Further testing of the blood to confirm if there is virus still in the blood (15-45% of people get rid of the infection on their own)
- Screening in all people born 1945-1965 recommended
- Screening those with high risk behaviors or risks of exposure
  - Injection/Intranasal drug users
  - Hemodialysis patients
  - Those after needle stick injuries
  - Children born to infected mothers
  - Received a transfusion from affected donor or before July 1992
  - Incarcerated persons
  - HIV
  - Solid organ donors/recipient

## TREATMENT & RECENT ADVANCES
- Treatment has many benefits
- Previous regimens with up to 73% cure rate
  - But many side effects
  - Now depending on the medication, up to 100% cure rates!!!
  - Minimal side effects

## REFERENCES
1) HCV Guidance: Recommendations for testing, managing, and treating Hepatitis C. AASLD guidelines.
2) WHO Hepatitis C. https://www.who.int