Michigan: Hepatitis C Rates Are Skyrocketing Among People Under 30

August 10, 2017

Health officials in Michigan are reporting that new hepatitis C virus (HCV) infections among 18- to 29-year-olds in the state have risen more than 473 percent over the last decade—and they're blaming the region's ongoing opioid crisis for the increase, The Detroit News reports.

According to data released last week by the Department of Health and Human Services, there were 2,060 new hepatitis C cases among 18- to 29-year-olds in Michigan in 2016, an incredible increase from the 359 cases reported in 2005. Among those in this age group with hepatitis C who shared their drug-use history, 84 percent reported using intravenous drugs.

Michigan's annual Viral Hepatitis Surveillance Report also revealed that the state had 11,883 new hepatitis C infections in 2016 overall, making it one of the most common reportable diseases in the state. There were also 1,284 new cases of hepatitis B virus (HBV) in 2016 as well as 223 cases of hepatitis A virus (HAV) in Michigan, as a result of a recent outbreak in the Detroit area that is still under investigation.

Meanwhile, admissions for treatment for heroin use have also gone up by 187 percent in Michigan since 2000, according to state health department. Deaths caused by heroin overdose also increased by 624 percent from 2000 through 2015 and rose by 18 percent from 2015 to 2016 alone.

In response to the update, residents are being urged to get vaccinated against both hepatitis A and B if they haven't already been and to practice good hand hygiene to help prevent the spread of HAV (which can be spread through the accidental ingestion of fecal matter). Injection drug users are also being urged to engage in harm reduction (such as not sharing needles and being careful about what they inject) to cut their risk of hep C infection and death.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/article/michigan-hepatitis-c-rates-skyrocketing-among-people-30