People Who Inject Drugs Succeed With Hep C Treatment

A new meta-analysis finds this population has a high success rate on hepatitis C therapy.

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Given that people who inject drugs (PWID) have a high success rate on hepatitis C virus (HCV) treatment, these individuals should not be restricted from receiving such medications, according to researchers behind a new meta-analysis of hep C treatment studies including PWID as participants.

Publishing their findings in The Lancet Gastroenterology and Hepatology, researchers included 38 studies representing 3,634 participants in their meta-analysis.

Twenty-one studies with a total of 1,408 participants included those with recent injection or noninjection drug use; of these a total of 97.5 percent completed hep C treatment, and 87.7 percent achieved a sustained virologic response 12 weeks after completing therapy (SVR12, considered a cure).

Thirty-six studies with a total of 2,987 participants included those receiving opioid medication treatment. Of these, 97.4 percent received HCV treatment and 90.7 percent of these individuals were cured.

Eight studies with a total of 670 participants included those with recent injection drug use. Of these, 96.9 percent received HCV treatment and 87.4 percent were cured of HCV.

Older participants were more likely to be cured and less likely to be lost to follow-up than younger ones. Those in clinical trials were about twice as likely as those in observational studies to be cured.

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