Spinal Injections Give 18 Patients Hep B in South Carolina

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Eighteen people have tested positive for the hepatitis B virus (HBV) after receiving spinal injections from the same doctor at a South Carolina clinic, The Post and Courier reports. Each patient developed hep B after visiting the Tri-County Spinal Care Center in North Charleston on the same dates in February. Since the outbreak, the state board of medical examiners has suspended the license of an anesthesiologist working at the clinic. The man was previously suspended in 2007 for abusing pain medications without a prescription. Officials say nine positive tests have been identified as acute hep B. The remaining half of the cases are clearing naturally or have already cleared on their own. Officials also are urging more than 500 patients who received injections at the clinic since September 2011 to get tested for HBV, saying they found “severe lapses in infection control procedures” while investigating the facility.

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