Poor Results for New Syringe Designed to Curb Hep C Spread

November 11, 2015

A new type of syringe apparently falls short at lowering the risk of hepatitis C virus (HCV) transmission. Publishing their findings in PLOS ONE, researchers conducted the first known study of the infectivity of hep C in different syringe designs.

The new type of syringe was engineered to reduced the likelihood of hep C transmission among injection drug users by reducing the amount of so-called dead space, which is the space between the syringe hub and needle, compared with the typically high dead space in syringes.

Looking at various low dead space (LDS) syringes, the researchers found that the best among them reduced the percentage of contaminated syringes to 65 percent, compared with a rate of 98 percent among standard syringes. None of the LDS syringes reduced the risk of transmission as well as insulin syringes with fixed needles (which are typically smaller than standard syringes), 47 percent of which retained viable hep C.

The researchers are also examining the LDS syringes' effects on potential HIV transmission.

To read a press release on the study, click here.

To read the study, click here.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.