Dear Colleagues: CDC Releases 2018 Viral Hepatitis Surveillance Report

August 11, 2020 By HHS Viral Hepatitis Blog

Cross-posted from the HHS.gov Hepatitis blog

Originally shared by the Centers for Disease Control in July 2020.

Dear Colleagues:

July 28th is World Hepatitis Day – a day for everyone across the globe to raise awareness and promote the need to reduce the global burden of viral hepatitis. An estimated 325 million people worldwide live with hepatitis B and/or C, most are unaware of their infection, and testing and treatment remain beyond reach. In the United States from 2013 to 2016, an estimated 2.4 million adults were living with hepatitis C virus infection with only 56% aware of their infection, and an estimated 862,000 adults were living with hepatitis B virus infection with only 34% aware of their infection.

In observance of World Hepatitis Day, CDC's viral hepatitis program updated its global hepatitis webpage and is sharing a World Hepatitis Day Feature; both of which highlight CDC collaborations around the world supporting viral hepatitis prevention and care, including implementation of a pilot program to eliminate hepatitis B and C in the country of Uzbekistan.

Today, CDC published an online viral hepatitis surveillance summary, Viral Hepatitis Surveillance – United States, 2018, reporting on cases of hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C for public health partners to use in focusing prevention efforts, planning services, allocating resources, developing policy, and detecting and responding to clusters of viral hepatitis infection. While the number and rate of new acute cases of hepatitis B remained stable, there was an increase in the number and rate of new acute surveillance summary documents that in 2018 the United States experienced increases in new acute cases of hepatitis A and hepatitis C. These increases are predominantly attributable to increased injection drug use and a lack of vaccine protection among adults at risk for hepatitis A and B infection.

Highlights from the 2018 surveillance summary include:

- An estimated 24,900 hepatitis A infections occurred in 2018, driven by person-to-person

outbreaks in multiple states, more than nine times as high as reported in 2014.

- It is estimated that 21,600 acute hepatitis B infections occurred in 2018, an increase of 19% since 2014. Over half of the reported cases of acute hepatitis B in 2018 were among persons aged 30–49 years.
- An estimated 50,300 acute hepatitis C infections occurred in 2018, an increase of 65% since 2014. Over 65% of the reported acute hepatitis C cases were among persons aged 20–39 years.

CDC aims to make progress worldwide towards preventing and controlling viral hepatitis. Visit our global homepage to learn about our progress, opportunities for prevention and treatment, and collaborations with other countries to achieve our common goal of eliminating viral hepatitis.

We recognize that many of us in public health and health care are also working tirelessly to control the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and we appreciate your efforts. World Hepatitis Day offers us a day to recommit to and invest in a world free from viral hepatitis and meet the challenges of testing, treatment, and prevention, especially among those affected by liver disease and COVID-19.

Thank you for your work and your commitment to the continuing journey to make viral hepatitis a disease of the past.

Sincerely,

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