Fear of Hepatitis C Transmission

February 8, 2018 By Greg Jefferys

The Fear of Infecting a Friend

Often my blog posts are triggered by emails and other conversations I have with people who have Hepatitis C or who have had Hepatitis C. Recently I have had a lot of talks about Hepatitis C transmission; how do you catch Hep C how is Hep C transmitted?

These conversations frequently trigger memories of my own experiences through the process of learning I had Hep C to the final relief of being Hep C free.

In the last few days I have had four different conversations with people about the terrible fear a person with Hepatitis C can carry of accidentally infecting a friend or loved one, or even total stranger, with Hep C virus.

Poisonous Blood

I remember when I was told that I had Hep C and I was overwhelmed by this terrible feeling that my blood was poisonous; that any person coming in contact with my blood via any means might catch the disease.

Whilst the reality is that it is very, very difficult to transmit Hepatitis C to another person, that fact does not prevent the anxiety and concern that one might accidently somehow infect a loved one.

At that time when I learned I was infected with Hep C I had a young grandson who I loved to play with. I loved to play but always in the back of my mind was the fear that somehow he would come into contact with my blood and catch Hep C from me.

Even though I knew it was almost impossible for me to transmit the HCV to anyone this knowledge did not remove the persistent anxiety in the back of my mind.

Hepatitis C Transmission in Sweden

Last weekend I had a conversation with a young man from Sweden, named Thomas, who discovered he had Hep C in 2002. This Swedish Hep C patient has been waiting since 2002 to get treatment through the Swedish health system. (The Swedish Health system triages access to treatment for Swedes with Hepatitis C. Like all other national services even the wealthy Swedish government cannot afford to offer all Swedes infected with Hepatitis C) Over those years of waiting Thomas has married and now has a three-year-old daughter. He was telling me how he lives with the terrible, and constant, fear of somehow accidently infecting his daughter or his wife.

He expressed how that fear of infecting someone else is always at the back of this mind, pushing down on him emotionally and mentally.

I understood that feeling well.

Hepatitis C Transmission Malaysia

Then today I received an email from a guy in Malaysia who is starting treatment for his Hep C this

week; he expressed that same burden of fear of infecting another person with Hepatitis C.
Hi Greg
I can’t wait to get rid of the unwelcome tenant. The feeling of something is living inside me & I’m always very afraid that I might infect someone else (like a zombie), this feeling is overwhelming. Last 3 weeks has been tough & the disease completely changed my perspective of life. (positive) But my journey is not over yet.
I will need your help for advice as I go through self medication.
Thxs again

This fear, this burden in the background, is a subject that does not get talked about much so I thought today I should write about it. Then even as I started writing this piece I received another email from the USA.

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