Halfway Through Hepatitis Awareness Month

May 16, 2018 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

Hepatitis Awareness Month is half over and I feel like we've barely begun. There is a desperate need for more awareness, particularly about hepatitis C. More people die from hepatitis C every year than from all 60 infectious reportable diseases combined.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most persons infected with viral hepatitis are asymptomatic and so are not identified or reported. Viral hepatitis is preventable. There is a vaccine for hepatitis B. The fact that we can cure hepatitis C is nothing short of a miracle. Hepatitis C cure rates are extremely high, and they keep climbing. When I was infected with hepatitis C 30 years ago, it was inconceivable that we would be able to eradicate this virus with pills and with minimal side effects, taken for two to three months. However, that is exactly what we are doing.

Curing and eliminating hepatitis C hinges on identifying those who have it, and linking them to care. This is why there is a need for Hepatitis Awareness Month. It is an opportunity to make difference. In fact, it is more than an opportunity—it is a chance to save lives.

Tweet @hepatitismag and let us know what you are doing to raise awareness during Hepatitis Awareness Month.

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