



# Hepatitis Awareness: Applying the Word ‘Syndemic’

May 22, 2018 By [Lucinda K. Porter RN](#)

---

The word “syndemic” applies when two or more concurrent or sequential epidemics interact in a population, and aggravate the prognosis and burden of disease. The viral hepatitis epidemic and the opioid crisis is an example of a syndemic. For a while, the rate of new hepatitis C cases was steadily declining. However, with the increasing opioid epidemic, the hep C rate has been increasing swiftly.

Opioid use and viral hepatitis are inseparable. Fix one and we get closer to fixing both. Fix both and we fix more than that – lives are saved, families are restored, and communities are revived. Hope will come sweeping in like a healing salve.

To address this, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released “Managing HIV and Hepatitis C Outbreaks Among People Who Inject Drugs: A Guide for State and Local Health Departments.” [Click here](#) to learn more about it.

Want to know more? Read Dr. Brett Giroir’s address on the [Infectious Disease and Opioid Crisis](#), delivered at a National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine workshop.

We can make a difference and make this syndemic go away. Tweet [@hepatitismag](#) about ways you are observing Hepatitis Awareness Month, and causing this syndemic to vanish.

---

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

<http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/blog/hepatitis-awareness-applying-word-syndemic>