Hepatitis C Increases in Multi Generations

Hep C is no longer considered a “baby boomer” disease.

July 17, 2020 By Connie M. Welch

Hep C on the Rise

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, along with the CDC, report new data showing the rise of hepatitis C infections in younger generations. The report states in 2018, millennials (those born from 1981-1996) who were diagnosed with hepatitis C are equal to the number of baby boomers (those born from 1945-1965) diagnosed in that same year.

Generation X (people born from 1966-1980) also show an increase in hepatitis C infection. Thus, putting those of reproductive age at higher risk for hepatitis C and related complications.

Report Findings for 2018

Millennials (adults between 20-30 years old) there were 36.5% newly reported cases of hepatitis C infections.

Baby Boomers (adults between mid-’50s to early ’70s) there were 36.3% of newly reported cases of hepatitis C infections.

Generation X (adults between late 30’s-early ’50s) there were 23.1% of newly reported cases of hepatitis C infections.

CDC Recommendations

For all adults 18 years and older to be tested at least once.

Testing for all pregnant women during every pregnancy.

Testing for everyone with risk factors, and for those with ongoing risk to have continual tests done.

The 2018 report shows hepatitis C infections are four times higher than in 2009. If proactive measures are not taken (testing, education, and prevention), the number of cases will increase, resulting in liver-related complications, and death.

In the U.S. there are over 3 million who have hepatitis C. Hepatitis C is linked to the primary cause for cirrhosis, liver cancer and liver transplants in the U.S. It is known as the “silent disease” since most people do not show symptoms for quite some time, while liver damage is being done.

Improved treatment for hepatitis C has a high cure of over 95% in most cases but left untreated, it can cause severe liver damage (cirrhosis), liver cancer, and death.

Common Ways Hepatitis C Is Transmitted

Hepatitis C infected blood enters the body and bloodstream of someone who is not infected

Through drug use either by injection or inhaling

Through pregnancy or childbirth

By unprotected sex

There are other ways hepatitis C is transmitted though not as common as these listed here

In Summary

It is important to note, these findings resulted in the CDC's recommendations for testing. This does not mean you are safe to assume you are tested by your primary doctor, hospital, or clinic. Make sure you are tested. Request to be tested and receive your test report.

The best proactive step you can take against hepatitis C is to get tested, seek treatment, and get cured. Get educated on all the ways hepatitis C is transmitted, and how to take care of your liver. Hep C Testing can save your life!

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