One Hundred Twenty Thousand Avoidable Hepatitis C Deaths

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that if Baby Boomers (people born from 1945-1965) are screened with one-time testing for hepatitis C, this may identify more than 800,000 infections. This translates into the potential to save more than 120,000 lives. Think about this--120,000 people might live who would otherwise die. One hundred twenty thousand people is the population of a small city, such as Charleston, South Carolina or Hartford, Connecticut.

When I imagine Hartford without any people, I shudder. Of course, these estimated 120,000 hepatitis C deaths are entirely avoidable--it starts with a cheap test. It costs $20 to $30, and is often free or covered by insurance. In addition to saving 120,000 lives, hepatitis C screening may change the quality of life for those who might otherwise live, but whom would suffer from this silent disease--and potentially infect others.

HCV screening = the potential to save lives--120,000 of them. Seems like a simple equation. We just have to get the word out.

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