Raising Hepatitis C Awareness

May 14, 2013 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

Wondering what you can do to help increase hepatitis C awareness? Here are a few suggestions:

- Encourage everyone you know who was born between 1945-1965 to be tested for hepatitis C.
- Be informed. Learn whatever you can about hepatitis C. Look at reliable sources of information. (Resources provided below)
- Come out of the closet. If you are comfortable with disclosure, tell others. You may be surprised to see how many people have or know of someone who has hepatitis C. If you are the first person they have encountered with this, you may be the voice of hope.
- Express your opinion to elected officials. Ask them to support and fund hepatitis C programs. To prepare for this, visit the Caring Ambassadors Program's *Hepatitis C by the Numbers Advocacy Map*. The map provides hepatitis B and C population information for congressional districts, along with links to information to contact elected officials.
- Write a letter for the opinion pages of your local newspaper.
- Record a public service announcement (PSA) for your local radio.
- Add a PSA to the signature line of your email. Feel free to use mine: *The CDC recommends testing all Baby Boomers for hepatitis C. It is not only HOW you lived, it is WHEN you lived. If you were born from 1945 through 1965, or if you have any viral hepatitis risk factors, get tested.*
- Use social media to spread the word. Post information on Facebook and Twitter. Follow other hepatitis activists and retweet their posts. The CDC's Twitter handle is @cdchep
- Get involved. There are many fine organizations devoted to education, advocacy, and other vital needs surrounding hepatitis C and other types of viral hepatitis. A few noteworthy organizations are listed under *Additional Resources* at the end of this article.

- Finally yet importantly, take care of your health. This is the top priority and the foundation that all activism rests on.

Please join me and other activists who are working to increase the public's awareness about viral hepatitis. Together we can change the world.

Additional Resources

Caring Ambassadors Program-Hepatitis C

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Hepatitis C Support Project *HCV Advocacy: Advocates and Activists Needed!*

Hep Magazine

National Alliance of States and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) - *Viral Hepatitis Advocacy Toolkit*

National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable

Project Inform

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http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/blog/raising-hepatitis-c