Who is at most at risk for hepatitis C?
• People who currently use or have ever used injection drugs
• Baby boomers (born 1945-1965)
• People who received a blood transfusion before 1992
• Hemodialysis patients or people who spent many years on dialysis for kidney failure
• People who received body piercings or tattoos done with non-sterile instruments
• People with known exposures to the hepatitis C virus, such as:
  • People exposed to hepatitis C in a healthcare setting
  • Recipients of blood or organs from a donor who tested positive for the hepatitis C virus
  • People living with HIV
  • Children born to mothers who have hepatitis C

What are the symptoms of hepatitis C?
Many people with hepatitis C do not have symptoms. About 20-30% of people with chronic hepatitis C will develop irreversible liver damage, known as cirrhosis, which may lead to liver failure, liver cancer, and death.

Symptoms that do occur may show up 6 to 7 weeks after exposure, and can include:
• Fever
• Fatigue
• Loss of appetite
• Nausea
• Vomiting
• Abdominal pain
• Dark urine
• Clay-colored bowel movements
• Joint pain
• Yellow skin and/or eyes (jaundice)
• Depression

How is hepatitis C spread?
Hepatitis C is spread by:
• Sharing needles or other equipment used to inject drugs
• Needle stick injuries in health care settings
• Being born to a mother who has hepatitis C
• Receiving a tattoo in an unprofessional setting

Less commonly, people can get hepatitis C by:
• Sharing personal care items that may come into contact with blood, like razors or toothbrushes
• Having sexual contact with a person who has hepatitis C

How can I prevent hepatitis C?
• Do not share needles or equipment used to inject drugs
• Do not share needles or equipment used for piercings or tattoos
• Use condoms during sex
• Follow safety precautions and wear protective clothing and gloves when disposing of contaminated sharp objects

What should I do if I think I have hepatitis C?
Get tested if you think you have been exposed to hepatitis C. Treatment is available, and hepatitis C can be cured if treated effectively.

WHO TO CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION
For more information about Hepatitis C, call Denver Public Health at (303) 602-3540.