The Facts You Need To Know
What’s the big deal about the liver?

What is hepatitis?

Common types of viral hepatitis

How can I protect myself from hepatitis C?

What can I do to take care of myself?
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT THE LIVER?

Turns food into energy and sends nourishment through your body

Stores vitamins & minerals

Filters poisons out of your blood

You can't live without your liver!
What is Hepatitis?

- Hepatitis is... inflammation of the liver
- There are 100 types of hepatitis!
  - Alcoholic hepatitis is #1
  
Hepatitis A, B, C are caused by a virus

- All forms of hepatitis can cause liver swelling, scar tissue, cirrhosis, liver cancer, liver failure, or death (if not treated in time)

Healthy liver

Liver with cirrhosis
THREE KINDS OF VIRAL HEPATITIS... DON'T GET THEM CONFUSED!

**Hepatitis A**: spread by eating food or drinking water with infected feces (poop)
- ✓ Vaccine
- ✓ Body usually cures itself

**Hepatitis B**: spread by having unprotected sex with an infected person, or contact with infected blood
- ✓ Vaccine
- ✓ Can be treated

**Hepatitis C**: spread by contact with infected blood
- ✓ NO Vaccine
- ✓ Can be cured
HCV IS 5 TIMES MORE COMMON AND EASIER TO GET THAN HIV!

- HCV is SUPER concentrated in blood.

HIV is counted in hundreds, but HCV is counted in millions.

HIV dies once it is in contact with air...

...but hep C can live in dry blood up to 4 days!
WHO GETS HEPATITIS C?

IT'S NOT WHO YOU ARE...

IT'S WHAT YOU DO!
WHO DOES HEP C AFFECT THE MOST? INJECTORS WHO SHARE

If someone has been an injector for over 1 year... **50%** chance HCV+

If someone has been an injector for over 5 years... **90%** chance HCV+
HOW DO YOU GET HEPATITIS C?

• Hepatitis C is only spread by... blood-to-blood contact
WHAT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WITH HEP C?

• About 25% of people who get hepatitis C will clear the virus on their own.

• Hepatitis C damages your liver slowly and silently.

• If you take care of yourself (avoid alcohol, get vaccinated against hepatitis A & B), you can live with hep C for many years.

The good news is... Hepatitis can be prevented and treated!!
Sometimes there are symptoms, often there are not!

Most people don’t have symptoms until they’ve been infected for a long time.

**Brain fog**

**Always tired**

**Fever/flu symptoms**

**Digestive problems**
RANK THE RISK FACTOR!

1 = HIGH RISK  
2 = MEDIUM RISK  
4 = LOW RISK  
1 = ?

- Sharing razors, toothbrushes, etc.
- Sex with a HCV+ person
- Non-professional tattoo or piercing
- Blood product before 1992

- Child born to HCV+ mother
- Vietnam era military veteran
- Hands-on healthcare
- Sharing works
WHEN YOU TAKE THE ANTIBODY TEST…

If it’s NEGATIVE...

- You do not have HCV
  *take steps to stay negative!

If it’s POSITIVE...

- You have been exposed to HCV
  take a “confirmatory test” to look for live virus

If it’s POSITIVE… work with your doctor and discuss further testing, treatment options
WHAT ABOUT “COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE?”

“Alternative” or “complementary” treatments do not CURE hep C, but may relieve symptoms.

Some herbs can be very toxic to the liver!

LET YOUR DOCTOR KNOW IF YOU ARE TAKING HERBS OR USING OTHER TREATMENTS!!
### IF YOU NEED TREATMENT...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genotype 1</th>
<th>Genotype 2 or 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48 weeks or more</td>
<td>26 weeks or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-50% cured</td>
<td>80-90% cured</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most people will have a healthier liver, even if they do not clear the virus completely.
HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF (and others!)

Don’t use or share injection equipment

Don’t touch anyone’s blood or objects that could have blood on it

Use condoms every time you have sex!

Use bleach to clean up blood spills ***
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

To keep yourself healthy and feeling well...

- No alcohol!
- No drugs (including tobacco!)
- Drink lots of water
- Eat lots of fruits & vegetables
- Get plenty of rest
- Get support
WHAT’S YOUR STATUS?

There’s only one way to find out...

GET TESTED!!

GET TESTED!!

GET TESTED!!

GET TESTED!!

GET TESTED!!
This informative Power Point presentation is brought to you as an educational service by the Nevada State Health Division Hepatitis Program in part by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Grant PS08180102)

and in collaboration with

Nevada State Health Division:
http://health.nv.gov/CD_HPCP.htm

Southern Nevada Health District:
http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/locations_maps.htm

Washoe County Health District:
http://www.co.washoe.nv.us/health/contact.html

Frontier and Rural Health Services (FaR):
http://health.nv.gov/BFHS.htm