

Public Health Points

York City Bureau of Health

Volume 27, Issue 11

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May 2012

Expanded Recommendation for Hepatitis C Testing

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has announced that it will soon be issuing draft guidelines proposing that all U.S. baby boomers get a one-time test for the hepatitis C virus. CDC estimates that 1 in 30 baby boomers – the generation born from 1945 through 1965 – has been infected with hepatitis C, and most don't know it. Hepatitis C causes serious liver diseases including liver cancer, which is the fastest-rising cause of cancer-related deaths, and the leading cause of liver transplants in the United States.

CDC believes this approach will address the largely preventable consequences of this disease, especially in light of newly available therapies that can cure up to 75 percent of infections.

“With increasingly effective treatments now available, we can prevent tens of thousands of deaths from hepatitis C,” said CDC Director Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H.

More than 2 million U.S. baby boomers are infected with hepatitis C, accounting for more than 75 percent of all American adults living with the virus. Baby boomers are five times more likely to be infected than other adults. Yet most infected baby boomers do not know they have the virus because hepatitis C can damage the liver for many years with few noticeable symptoms. More than 15,000 Americans, most of them baby boomers, die each year from hepatitis C-related illness, such as cirrhosis and liver cancer, and deaths have been increasing steadily for over a decade and are projected to grow significantly in coming years.

“Identifying these hidden infections early will allow more baby boomers to receive care and treatment, before they develop life-threatening liver disease,” said Kevin Fenton, M.D., director of CDC's National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and Tuberculosis Prevention.

Up until this point CDC guidelines called for testing only individuals with certain known risk factors for hepatitis C infection. But studies find that many baby boomers do not perceive themselves to be at risk and are not being tested.

CDC estimates one-time hepatitis C testing of baby boomers could identify more than 800,000 additional people with hepatitis C, prevent the costly consequences of liver cancer and other chronic liver diseases and save more than 120,000 lives.

CDC's draft recommendations will be available for a public comment period from May 22 – June 8, 2012.

For additional information about hepatitis, visit www.cdc.gov/hepatitis.

Reportable Conditions – 2012 City of York, Pa

Reported Cases	Apr.	Total
Animal Bites	8	32
Campylobacter Enteritis	0	2
Chlamydia	52	178
Cryptosporidiosis	0	1
Gonorrhea	36	109
Hepatitis B	0	1
Hepatitis C	4	35
HIV Infection	0	4
Influenza, Type B	0	3
Invasive Group A Beta-Strep Disease	1	1
Lead Poisoning	3	11
Lyme Disease	0	1
Pertussis	1	1
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Infection	1	34
Salmonellosis	1	2
Syphilis – Primary/Secondary	0	1
Total Case Reports	107	416

June is National Safety Month – “Safety 24/7”

Each June, the National Safety Council encourages organizations and the public to get involved and participate in National Safety Month. NSM is an annual observation to educate and influence behaviors around leading causes of preventable injuries and deaths. This year each week carries a theme that brings attention to critical safety issues.

Week 1 – Promote Employee Wellness: Create workplace environments that help employees increase physical activity; promote healthier eating and smoking cessation.

Week 2 – Work Ergonomically: Design the job environment to fit the person; learn how to work smarter and prevent conditions such as overexertion and repetitive strain injury.

Week 3 – Prevent Falls: Reduce your risk and find fall hazards in your workplace and home to prevent injuries and keep others safe around the clock.

Week 4 – Drive Safely: Keep in mind tips on issues such as cell phone distracted driving, seat belt use, impaired driving, and aggressive driving to stay safe when driving for work or pleasure.

For further information about National Safety Month, check out the National Safety Council website at www.nsc.org. Additional information about summer safety topics is also available on the same website: Canoe Safety, Inline Skating Safety, Playground Safety, Safe Bicycling, Setting Up Your Child’s Swing Set, Skateboarding Safety Tips, Summer & Alcohol Safety, Sun & Heat Exposure, Surviving the Hot Weather, and Using Fireworks Safely.



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