

AS SEEN ON TV!

AVON
AMERICA'S #1 ANTI-AGING EYE CREAM
 IS NOW NEW & IMPROVED...
EYE LIFT
 \$28
 FREE SHIPPING WITH \$40 ORDER

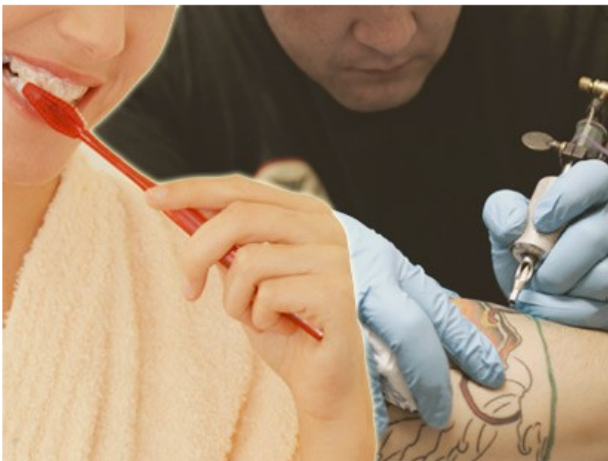
BREAKING NEWS: VETERANS AFFAIRS SECRETARY JIM NICHOLSON HAS RESIGNED AND WILL RETURN TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Health

Home > Health

Protecting Yourself From Hepatitis C

Liver Damage From Hepatitis C Can Be Deadly; How to Safeguard Your Health



Hepatitis C threats range from unsanitary tattoos to shared toothbrushes.

By **SANDRA G. GOMPFE, M.D.**
 July 13, 2007



A 49-year-old male tattoo artist believed his tiredness was related to aging.

He'd always felt healthy and hadn't given doctors much thought. He'd partied a bit over the years, but an HIV test he took not long ago turned out to be negative. But his age and the fact that he was a bit overweight led him to check in with a doctor.

It may have been a decision that saved his life.

As he sat listening to his doctor review his laboratory tests, he heard something unexpected. "Your liver seems to be inflamed, and we ought to do some more tests."

A blood draw and a liver sonogram later, he learned that he had liver damage from chronic hepatitis C and that his liver might be on the way to cirrhosis, a terminal disease he thought only alcoholics got.

Devastating accounts like the one above are not as uncommon as one might think. Chronic viral hepatitis affects more than 2 million Americans, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and

RELATED STORIES

- Doc May Be Hep C Threat; 4,500 Urged to Get Tested
- Hepatitis spread to patient in dental office
- Hepatitis C Is Not Uncommon
- Inked Faces
- Ask Dr. Timothy Johnson

TOP HEALTH STORIES

- Food Fears: How Safe Is Your Dinner?
- Childhood Brain Tumor Survivors
- At Home, Women Wear the Pants

Font Size

A A A

E-mail

Print

Share

Talk Back

- Tell us what you think
- Add new facts
- Talk straight to the newsmakers

Comment & Contribute

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING [4 Comments](#)

Listen to what Dr. Gompf's, says! Her prof...
 leem32 11:58 AM

I would just like to thank ABC for this ve...
 maralora Jul-16

I am a type 1 and had a viral load of 10 m...
 vintageman55 Jul-14

COMMENT

Discuss & Debate

DISCUSS THIS TOPIC WITH THE ABC NEWS COMMUNITY [Read All](#)

Chat About Health and Fitness Issues

Post Video



Connect with Newsmakers



Capture video of a news event? Upload it now.

VIDEO PLAYER

How Safe Is Our Food?
 Astronomical Medical Care Costs
 Dry-Eye Concerns

MORE VIDEOS

ADVERTISEMENT

Smarter Than BOTOX®
 try iQ SkinTensive FREE for 30 days
[Click Here](#)

1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010 2020

before after
 simulated imagery

RESTORES. SMOOTHES. FIRMS.
 for the appearance of younger-looking skin.

Try iQ SkinTensive Today!
 >> [Click here](#) for more information
[click here](#)
TRY IT FREE
www.iqderma.com

CAPTURE THE NEWS

Sponsored Links

Prepare to be Shocked

You may be younger than you think. Take the RealAge test and find out.
www.RealAge.com

Bowflex® TreadClimber®

Official Site: Buy Direct & Receive Free Shipping for a limited time.
www.TreadClimber.com

[Buy a link here](#)

Prevention estimates that 30,000 Americans become infected with hepatitis C each year.

What Is Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is one of several viruses that attack the liver. Only 15 percent of people can fight off the infection without treatment. The other 85 percent develop chronic viral hepatitis, in which the immune system tries to destroy the virus, leading to inflammation and scarring.

Over time — usually decades — this scarring leads to cirrhosis. Liver cancer can also occur but is a much rarer cause of death than cirrhosis.

Who Is at Risk?

Hepatitis C is spread primarily by blood. Sex is not a high-risk activity, but this, too, can occasionally transmit infection.

More often than not, however, hepatitis C is acquired by sharing needles or snorting cocaine through shared "straws," which often contain small amounts of blood.

Some people acquired hepatitis C from tattoos or piercings before sterile equipment became required by law. Others contracted the virus from blood transfusions before blood-supply screening began in the 1980s.

Protecting Yourself From Hepatitis C

1 2 3 Next

[Read 4 Comments and Post Your Own](#)

Most Viewed

AUDIENCE FAVORITES

[View All](#)

EXCLUSIVE: Soldier Challenges Congress

Scandalized Senator vs. Larry Flynt

VIDEO: To Hell and Back

i-CAUGHT: Clinton and Edwards Team Up?

PHOTOS: Hollywood's 2nd Marriages

PHOTOS: Too-Hot GF's and Not-So-Hot BF's

Sponsored Links

Prepare to be Shocked

You may be younger than you think. Take the RealAge test and find out.
www.RealAge.com

End Stenosis Pain Forever

Advanced arthroscopic outpatient procedure with 95%+ success rate.
bonati.com

Medicare Diabetic Supply

At No Cost to You. Apply Now to get Free Delivery on your Supplies!
www.accessdiabeticsupplies.com

[Buy a link here](#)

[Feedback](#) | [Wireless](#) | [E-mails & News Alerts](#) | [Message Boards](#) | [RSS Headlines](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [ABC News Store](#)

[Contact Us](#) | [ABC.com](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Advertising Info](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [UPDATED Privacy Policy/Your California Privacy Rights](#)

External links are provided for reference purposes. ABC News is not responsible for the content of external internet sites.

Copyright © 2007 ABCNews Internet Ventures



ROZEREM™ IS A TRADEMARK OF TAKEDA PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY LIMITED AND USED UNDER LICENSE BY TAKEDA PHARMACEUTICALS NORTH AMERICA, INC. LUPOXID® (FLUOXAMINE) IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF SOLIX PHARMACEUTICALS, INC. ©2007 TAKEDA PHARMACEUTICALS NORTH AMERICA, INC. RAM-01220



enter here for
a chance to win

ROLLOVER FOR
IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

ROLLOVER FOR OFFICIAL
SWEEPSTAKES RULES



Tuesday, July 17, 2007

Good Morning America | World News | 20/20 | Primetime | Nightline | This Week | ABC News Now | ICAUGHT

World News: With Food Imports on the Rise,

Register | Sign In

Search

Go

Home | News Summary | World | U.S. | Blotter | Politics | Money | Health | Entertainment | ESPN Sports | Sci-Tech | The Law | Blogs | More

BREAKING NEWS: VETERANS AFFAIRS SECRETARY JIM NICHOLSON HAS RESIGNED AND WILL RETURN TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Health

Home > Health

Protecting Yourself From Hepatitis C

Liver Damage From Hepatitis C Can Be Deadly; How to Safeguard Your Health

It is interesting to note that since these measures were put into place, the risk of getting hepatitis C from a blood transfusion has fallen to only about 0.001 percent.

HIV infection is also a risk factor for the disease; up to 40 percent of HIV patients are also infected with hepatitis C. Worse, these patients develop cirrhosis five times faster than those without HIV.

Font Size

A A A

E-mail

Print

Share

Talk Back

- Tell us what you think
- Add new facts
- Talk straight to the newsmakers

Comment & Contribute

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING [4 Comments](#)

Listen to what Dr. Gompf's, says! Her prof...
leem32 11:58 AM

I would just like to thank ABC for this ve...
maralora Jul-16

[I am a type 1 and had a viral load of 10 m...](#)
vintageman55 Jul-14

COMMENT

Discuss & Debate

DISCUSS THIS TOPIC WITH THE ABC NEWS COMMUNITY [Read All](#)

Chat About Health and Fitness Issues

Post Video



Connect with Newsmakers



Capture video of a news event? Upload it now.



How Safe Is Our Food?

Astronomical Medical Care Costs

Dry-Eye Concerns

MORE VIDEOS

RELATED STORIES

- Doc May Be Hep C Threat; 4,500 Urged to Get Tested
- Hepatitis spread to patient in dental office
- Hepatitis C Is Not Uncommon
- Inked Faces
- Ask Dr. Timothy Johnson

TOP HEALTH STORIES

- Food Fears: How Safe Is Your Dinner?
- Childhood Brain Tumor Survivors
- At Home, Women Wear the Pants

Sponsored Links

Prepare to be Shocked

You may be younger than you think. Take the RealAge test and find out.
www.RealAge.com

Medicare Diabetic Supply

At No Cost to You. Apply Now to get Free Delivery on your Supplies!
www.accessdiabeticsupplies...

Buy a link here

Signs and Symptoms

Those suffering from hepatitis C may have fatigue, poor concentration and mild pain on the right side of the abdomen.

Unlike other hepatitis viruses, which cause yellowing of the eyes, nausea and fevers, hepatitis C infection is usually "silent" for decades until cirrhosis occurs.

Cirrhosis, or scarring of the liver, prevents the liver from filtering blood appropriately. Fluids from the liver back up into the spleen and veins throughout the body, causing the spleen to swell and the belly to fill with gallons of fluid.

In severe cases, legs develop large varicose veins and life-threatening bleeding from the esophagus can occur. Some patients may even go into a coma because the liver fails to clear toxins from the blood.

If the signs of hepatitis C are present, doctors may check for liver damage with routine blood tests. Lab tests can only predict that something is wrong, not how much damage has occurred.

How Do I Protect Myself?

The best way to prevent hepatitis C is to avoid contact with another person's blood.

Injection drug use, snorting cocaine and even sharing toothbrushes or razors can transmit hepatitis C.

Conversely, hepatitis C-infected mothers have a low risk of

ADVERTISEMENT

Enjoy your
Unlimitedness

Buy One LG VX8300,
Get One Free
\$49.99

AFTER \$50 ONLINE INSTANT DISCOUNT
AND NEW 2YR ACTIVATION PER PHONE.



Learn More

Free Shipping

ONLY FROM
verizon wireless

giving their babies the infection during pregnancy and breast-feeding is safe. There is no vaccine that prevents hepatitis C, however.

For people with hepatitis C, the best way to slow down the development of cirrhosis is to avoid more liver inflammation. Ask your doctor whether you should be vaccinated against hepatitis A and B viruses, which also cause liver damage. Don't ever drink alcoholic beverages. To a hepatitis-infected liver, alcohol is like tossing gasoline onto a raging fire. Be careful with medications, even over-the-counter medicines like acetaminophen or herbal products.

Protecting Yourself From Hepatitis C - Continued
[Previous](#) [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [Next](#)

[Read 4 Comments and Post Your Own](#)

Sponsored Links

Prepare to be Shocked

You may be younger than you think. Take the RealAge test and find out.
www.RealAge.com

Sick & Tired of Being Fat?

Lose up to 10 lbs in 10 days! New natural breakthrough in weightloss!
www.fatlosttreatment.com

Medicare Diabetic Supply

At No Cost to You. Apply Now to get Free Delivery on your Supplies!
www.accessdiabeticsupplies.com

[Buy a link here](#)



Most Viewed

AUDIENCE FAVORITES

[View All](#)

- EXCLUSIVE: Soldier Challenges Congress
- Scandalized Senator vs. Larry Flynt
- VIDEO: To Hell and Back
- i-CAUGHT: Clinton and Edwards Team Up?
- PHOTOS: Hollywood's 2nd Marriages
- PHOTOS: Too-Hot GF's and Not-So-Hot BF's

[Feedback](#) | [Wireless](#) | [E-mails & News Alerts](#) | [Message Boards](#) | [RSS Headlines](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [ABC News Store](#)

[Contact Us](#) | [ABC.com](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Advertising Info](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [UPDATED Privacy Policy/Your California Privacy Rights](#)

External links are provided for reference purposes. ABC News is not responsible for the content of external internet sites.

Copyright © 2007 ABCNews Internet Ventures

SAVE \$1.00 ON ANY LISTERINE Whitening PRE-BRUSH RINSE 16oz or larger

CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD YOUR COUPON



Good Morning America | World News | 20/20 | Primetime | Nightline | This Week | ABC News Now | iCAUGHT

GMA: FDA Hearing -- Is Your Food Safe?

Register | Sign In

Search

GO

Home | News Summary | World | U.S. | Blotter | Politics | Money | Health | Entertainment | ESPN Sports | Sci-Tech | The Law | Blogs | More

BREAKING NEWS: VETERANS AFFAIRS SECRETARY JIM NICHOLSON HAS RESIGNED AND WILL RETURN TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Health

Home > Health

Protecting Yourself From Hepatitis C

Liver Damage From Hepatitis C Can Be Deadly; How to Safeguard Your Health

It is important to note that by the time a person develops symptoms, it's too late to do anything except treat the symptoms and hope for a liver transplant. So if you think you are at risk, don't wait until your doctor finds abnormal labs or physical signs. Ask to be tested. This may include blood tests and possibly a liver biopsy.

Font Size

A A A

E-mail

Print

Share

Talk Back

- Tell us what you think
- Add new facts
- Talk straight to the newsmakers

Comment & Contribute

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING 4 Comments

Listen to what Dr. Gompf's, says! Her prof...
leem32 11:58 AM

I would just like to thank ABC for this ve...
maralora Jul-16

I am a type 1 and had a viral load of 10 m...
vintageman55 Jul-14

COMMENT

Discuss & Debate

DISCUSS THIS TOPIC WITH THE ABC NEWS COMMUNITY [Read All](#)

Chat About Health and Fitness Issues

Post Video



Connect with Newsmakers



Capture video of a news event? Upload it now.

How Is Hepatitis C Treated?

Hepatitis C is typically treated with a combination of pills and injections given for 48 weeks. This treatment is successful in 40 percent of people.

Even if the virus is not eliminated, treatment can reverse some liver scarring. Patients with advanced disease may need to continue the treatment indefinitely. Treatment may also be used to "tide over" a person with cirrhosis until the person receives a liver transplant.

The most common side effects from treatment are flulike symptoms with fever and body aches. Severe depression, anemia, thyroid problems, infections and lung scarring can also occur.

New treatments are being explored that may some day reduce the side effects of treating hepatitis C.

Dr. Sandra Gompf is an associate professor of medicine in the division of infectious disease and international medicine at the University of South Florida College of Medicine and chief of infectious disease at the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa, Fla.

RELATED STORIES

- Doc May Be Hep C Threat; 4,500 Urged to Get Tested
- Hepatitis spread to patient in dental office
- Hepatitis C Is Not Uncommon
- Inked Faces
- Ask Dr. Timothy Johnson

TOP HEALTH STORIES

- Food Fears: How Safe Is Your Dinner?
- Childhood Brain Tumor Survivors
- At Home, Women Wear the Pants

Sponsored Links

Prepare to be Shocked

You may be younger than you think. Take the RealAge test and find out.
www.RealAge.com

FREE Health Insurance Quotes & Expert Help

Affordable Health Plans for Singles, Families, and Businesses. Easy Form...
<http://www.MostChoice.com>
[Buy a link here](#)

Protecting Yourself From Hepatitis C - Continued
[Previous](#) [1](#) [2](#) [3](#)

[Read 4 Comments and Post Your Own](#)

Sponsored Links

Prepare to be Shocked

VIDEO PLAYER

How Safe Is Our Food?
Astronomical Medical Care Costs
Dry-Eye Concerns

MORE VIDEOS

ADVERTISEMENT

ON THE LINE pizza.com