

# Hepatitis C Counseling and Treatment Guidance for Medical Providers Working with People Experiencing Homelessness

## Guidance for Speaking About Hepatitis C With Patients

**Hepatitis C (Hep C or HCV) is a viral infection that causes liver swelling and can lead to severe liver damage.**

- Hep C spreads through contact with infected blood such as by sharing needles, syringes, or other items used to prepare drugs.
- If left untreated, Hep C can cause severe and life-threatening health issues, such as cirrhosis, liver failure, or liver cancer.
- **Hep C can be cured! Getting tested and treated promptly can reduce health risks.**

**Many people with Hep C may not know they're infected, since the first phase of the infection rarely causes symptoms.**

Symptoms of chronic Hep C can include:

- Jaundice (yellowing of skin)
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Fever
- Muscle aches
- Bleeding/bruising easily
- Loss of appetite/weight loss
- Swelling in feet and legs
- Itchy skin
- Dark urine
- Memory/concentration issues
- Spiderlike blood vessels on the skin

## Resources for Medical Providers

- **HCV Treatment Guidelines:** [hcvguidelines.org](http://hcvguidelines.org)
- **HCV Drug Interactions:** [hep-druginteractions.org](http://hep-druginteractions.org)
- **National Clinician Consultation Center:** (844) 437-4636
- **CEI Line for Clinician Consult:** (866) 637-2342
- **CEI On-demand Clinical Education:** [ceitraining.org](http://ceitraining.org)
- **Syringe Service Programs (SSPs):** Provide Hep C prevention services such as sterile supplies, as well as testing, navigation and treatment. Find locations and phone numbers by calling or texting **988** and [here](#).

