



HEPATITIS C CHECKLIST

You may find this checklist helpful if you think you may be at risk of hep C. Talk to your healthcare professional about hep C and getting tested. You don't need to explain why you would like to get tested if you feel uncomfortable doing so. It doesn't matter how you caught hep C, it is important to get tested.

HEP C RISK FACTORS

You may be at risk of hepatitis C if you can say 'Yes' to any of the following:

- Have you ever had a tattoo or body piercing done using unsterile equipment or somewhere other than a licensed studio?
- Did you receive a blood transfusion prior to July 1992?
- Have you ever taken drugs through needles or your nose – even once?
- Have you ever lived in or received health care in Eastern Europe, Russia, Egypt and North Africa, India, Pakistan, or travellers to those countries?
- Does your mother or a household member have hep C?
- Have you ever been in prison?

Less common risks include:

- Sexual practices which may risk blood contact with a person who is infected with the hepatitis C virus
- Sharing personal care items, such as razors or toothbrushes that may have come in contact with the blood of an infected person

HEP C SYMPTOMS

The symptoms associated with hep C infection may be different for everyone. Many people with hep C do not have symptoms and do not know they are infected. Some people will notice symptoms just two to 12 weeks after becoming infected, while others will experience them six months later. In some cases, people can live with hep C for years before they experience any symptoms at all.

If symptoms occur, they may include:

- Feeling tired
- Loss of appetite
- Stomach pain
- Nausea
- Joint pain
- Jaundice – which is yellowing of the whites of the eyes, or dark urine, or pale-coloured bowel movements

This checklist is not meant to diagnose people with hep C, nor does it replace the advice of your healthcare professional. Please talk to your healthcare professional if you have any questions about hep C.

TALKING TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL ABOUT HEPATITIS C

Here are some questions that may help you organise your thoughts when you visit:

- Where do I have to go to be tested?
- What tests do I need?
- What could the results mean?
- Do I need to get tested for hep A and hep B?

GETTING TESTED FOR HEP C IS THE ONLY WAY TO KNOW FOR SURE IF YOU HAVE IT.

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hepatitis C. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HCV/PDFs/HepCGeneralFactSheet.pdf> Accessed December 2023.

BPAC. A spotlight on the key causes of chronic liver disease. <https://bpac.org.nz/2022/cld.aspx> Accessed December 2023.

The Hepatitis Foundation of New Zealand. <https://www.hepatitisfoundation.org.nz/> Accessed December 2023.

This resource/checklist was downloaded from the www.hepinfo.co.nz website. The website is intended solely for New Zealand residents. It is intended for informational purposes only and should not be used to replace a discussion with a healthcare professional. All decisions made regarding patient care must be handled by a healthcare professional and be made based on the unique needs of each patient.

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