



# Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)


CHRs can save lives

Brigg Reilley, Epidemiologist

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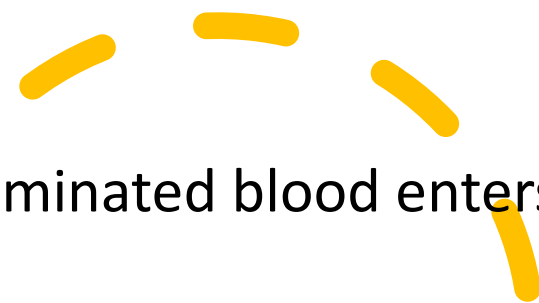


# Most important points

- Millions of persons in the US have HCV
  - Most persons with HCV have no symptoms
  - HCV is a leading cause of liver cancer
  - HCV is nearly 100% curable
  - **LINKING PATIENTS TO TREATMENT WILL SAVE LIVES**
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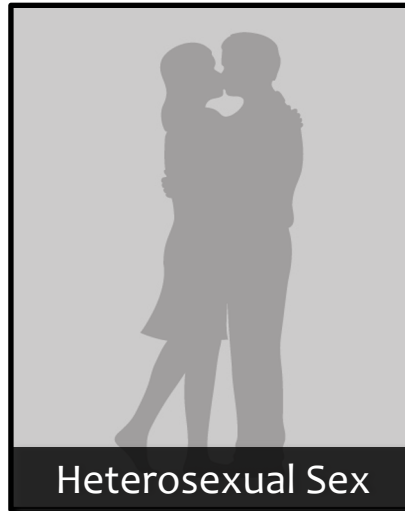
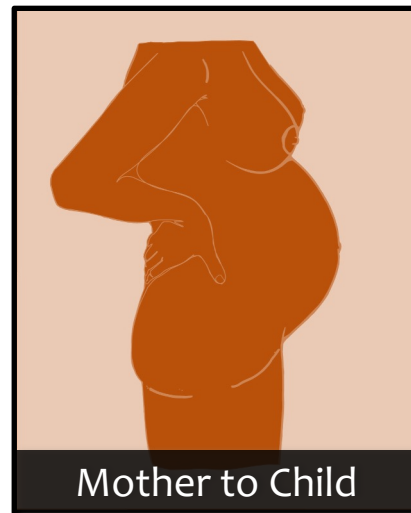
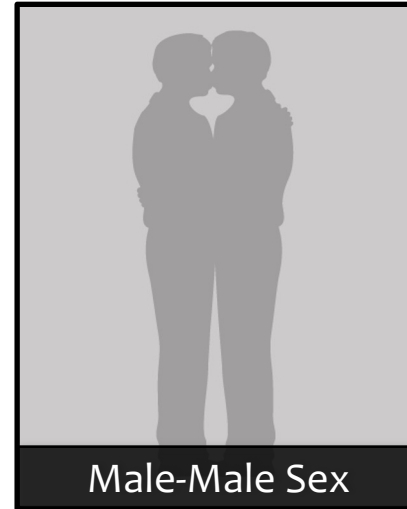
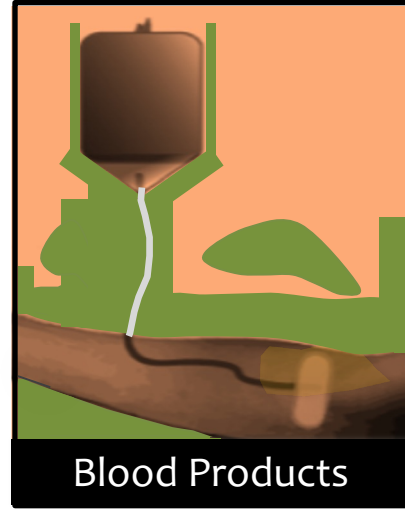
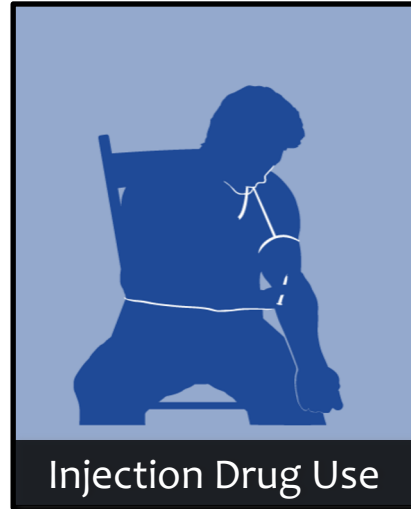
# HCV transmission



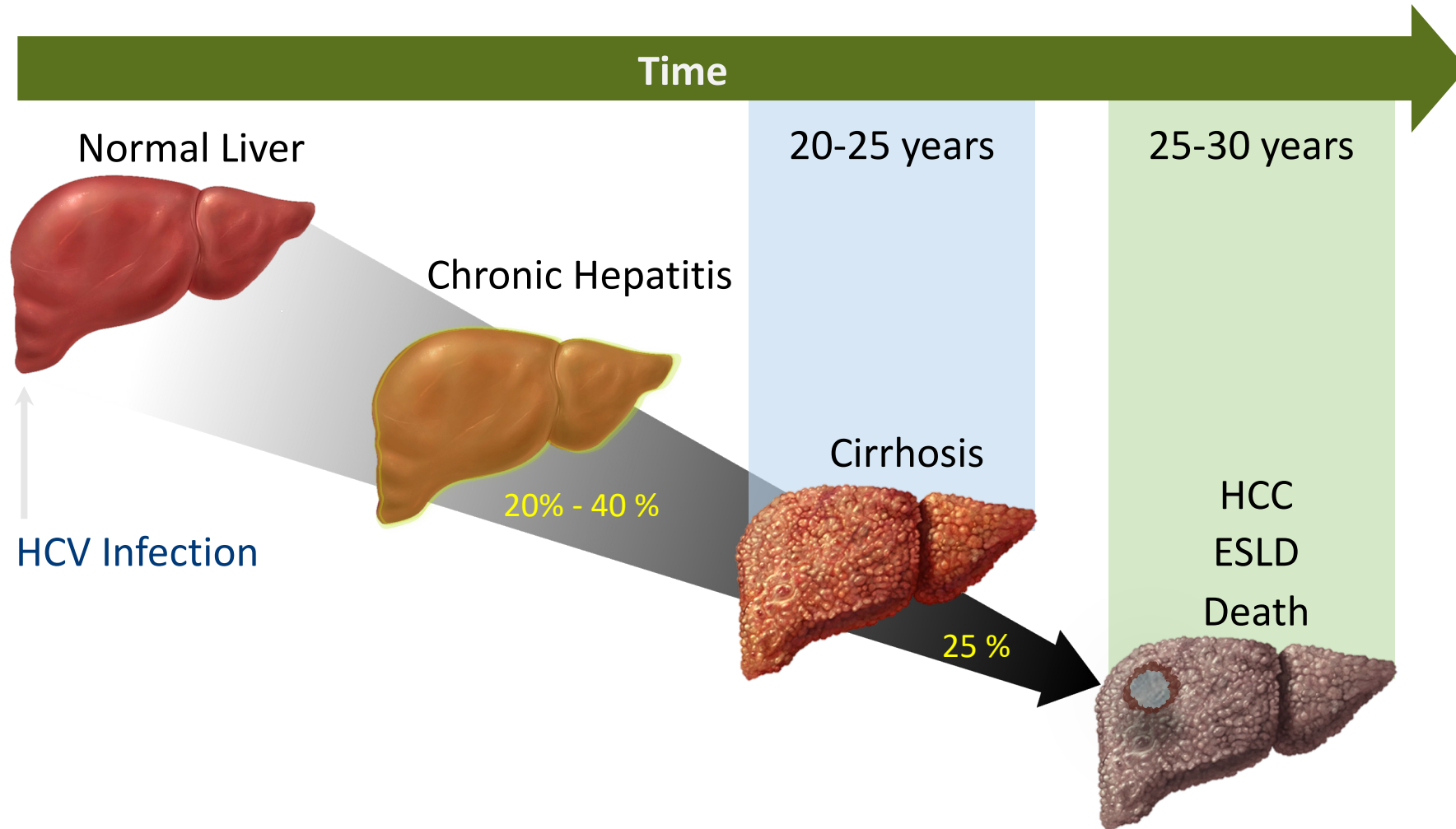
Almost all bloodborne, “contaminated blood enters the body of another person”

- Before 1992 medical exposure, transfusion
- Non-professional tattoos, injecting drugs
- About 20% of persons have no known exposure to the virus
  
- This is only one type of ‘viral hepatitis,’ others include Hep A and Hep B, both of which are vaccine preventable

# Risk Factors for Transmission of Hepatitis C



# Hepatitis C: Progression of Disease



# HCV is common

About 3.5 million persons in USA have it

About half of them do not know they have it

Leading cause of liver cancer and liver transplants nationwide

American Indian/Alaska Native people have about 3x the national rate of HCV related mortality

HCV: how  
do we  
diagnose  
it?

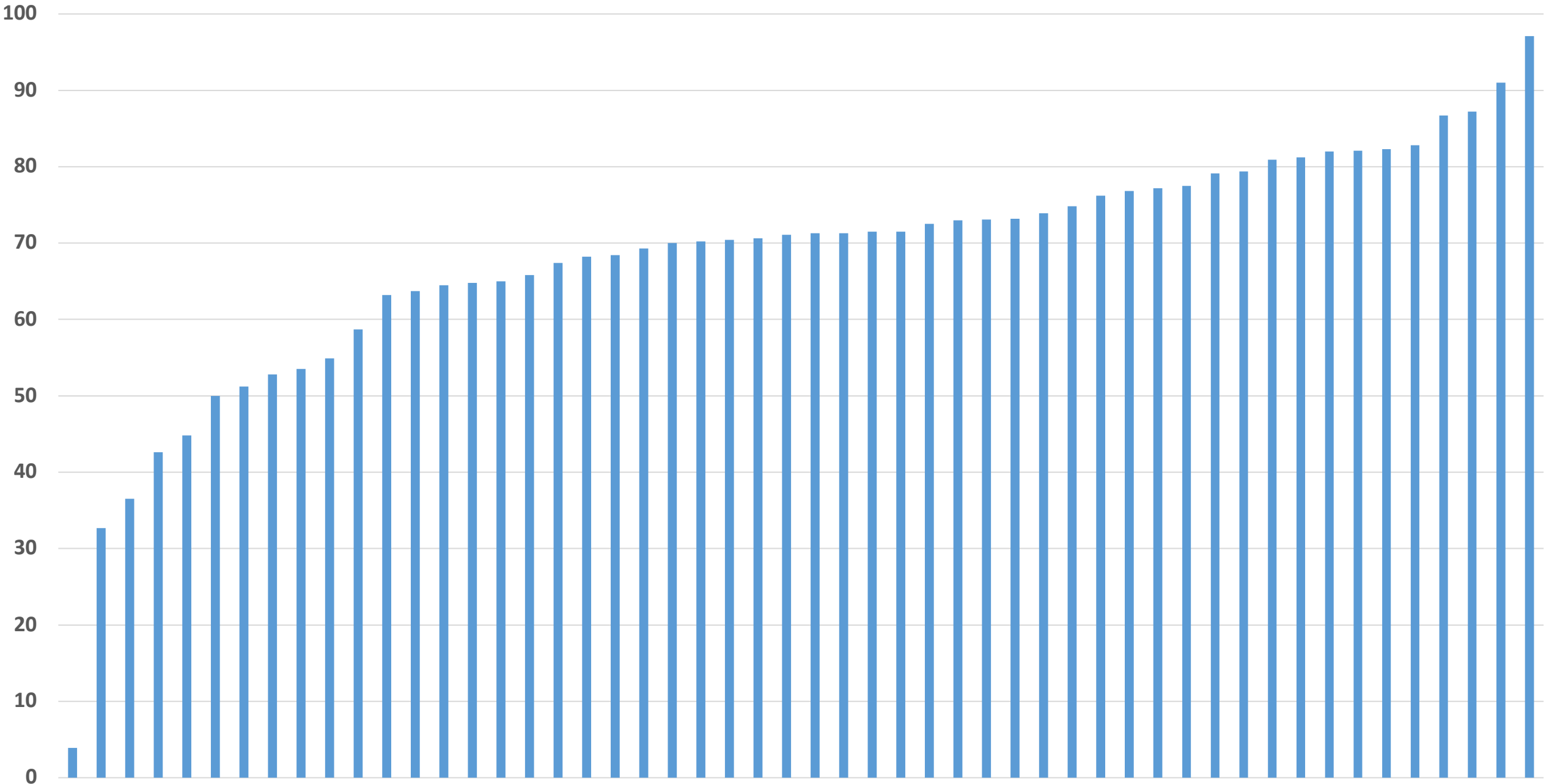
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Blood test, check for antibodies and  
confirm with viral load test

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Screening recommended for all adults  
and adolescents, and more frequently  
for persons at risk of disease (such as  
drug use/injection associated with  
national opioid and meth epidemics)

# HCV Screening Coverage %, Birth Cohort, Federal SUs, 2022





# Treatment options: Then, and Now



# HCV: how we treat it

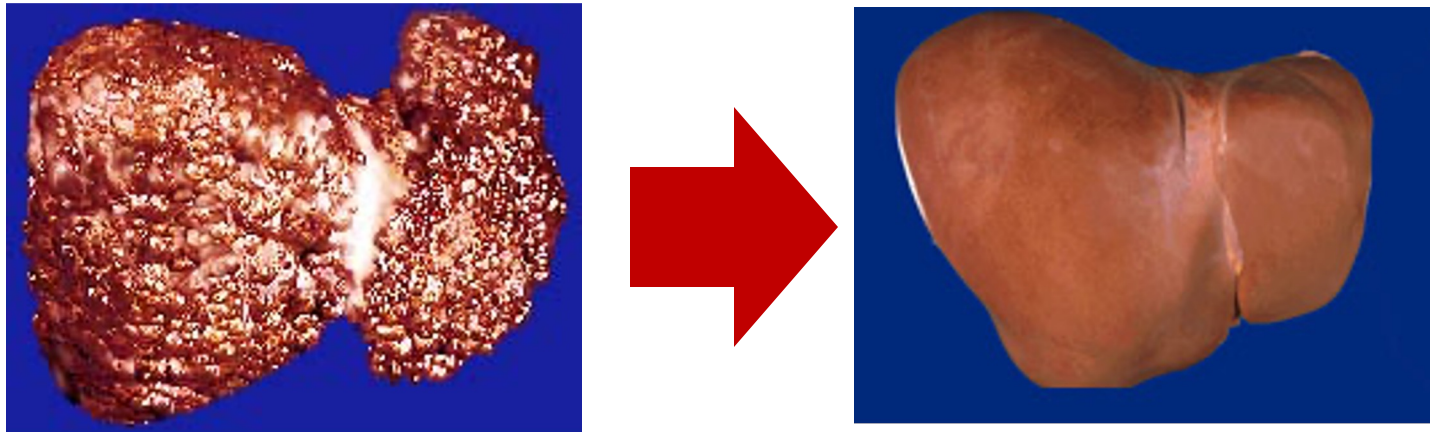
Old days: long treatment, injections, side effects, didn't always work

Now: short treatment, almost no side effects, works almost 100%

Cost is not a barrier! Some facilities may need to do paperwork and start treatment 2-3 week after diagnosis

## Goal of Treatment

- **SVR12 (cure) of HCV** is associated with:
  - 50% Reduction in All-cause Mortality
  - 70% Reduction of Liver Cancer
  - 90% Reduction in Liver Failure



SVR: Sustained Virological Response

Lok A. NEJM 2012; Ghany M. Hepatol 2009; Van der Meer AJ. JAMA 2012

# HCV who can get treated

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Everyone

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Some service units have over 100 patients who need linking to care. CHR's can help!

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Raise awareness of HCV testing and treatment in community

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Identify barriers to care and advocate with providers and patients, email us as needed we are here to help

# Example 1 of 3

65 year old woman has bleeding in throat, goes to IHS emergency room

Urgently transported by helicopter to more advanced hospital

Diagnosed with esophageal varices and late-stage liver disease due to chronic HCV infection

## Example 2 of 3

She had no known exposures to HCV, lived in remote location, did not drink or smoke and led a very healthy life

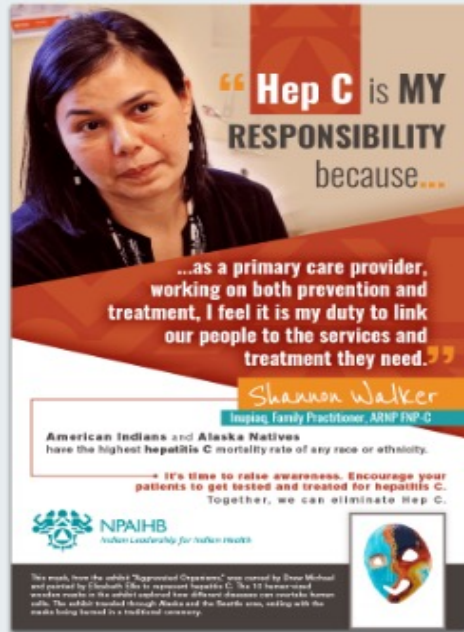
Looking at her own history, she remembered she had experimented with drugs in her 20s for a short time with a boyfriend who used, including snorting and injecting

## Example 3 of 3

Patient was  
successfully  
treated for HCV  
and cured

Got well enough  
to travel to see  
grandchildren

<https://www.nativehealthresources.org/>



Hep C Poster 1




Hep C Video: Hep C is Everyone's Responsibility – For Communities







HCV cure



“When I can tell the patients they are cured, we both cry. Every time.”

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Pharmacist, Claremore hospital, IHS