SEX, DRUGS & HEP C

Hepatitis C - should it be on my radar?

THE FACTS

• Knowing the facts gives you the knowledge to protect yourself.

• Hepatitis C is also known as hep C or HCV.

• An estimated 13-20% of people with HIV also have hep C. This is known as HIV/HCV co-infection.

• The longer hep C remains undetected, the greater the risks of sexual transmission, possibility of liver disease and cancer.

• There is no vaccine for hep C, although hep C can be cured if treated.

WAYS OF TRANSMITTING HEP C

• Sexually by invisible particles of infected blood on fingers, vaginas, cocks, hands, gloves, dams, condoms, lube containers, sex toys and douching equipment.

• Sharing injecting equipment (needles, water, spoons, tourniquets, filters, swabs).

• Sharing barrels for ‘booty bumping’ (shooting drugs up your bum).

• Sharing straws for snorting.

• Unsterile tattooing, body piercing, scarification.

• Blood play.

• In some countries by blood transfusions and medication procedures.

“Hep C can be transmitted sexually by invisible particles of blood.”
INCREASING THE RISK

- Sharing injecting equipment.
- Group fucking sessions.
- Longer, harder, rougher fucking sessions.
- ‘Chem’, ‘fuelled' or ‘wired' sex - which alters pain perception and increases pleasure.
- Raw sex (sex without a condom).
- Being dehydrated increases risks for skin tearing.
- Having syphilis and other STIs including chlamydia and gonorrhea.
- HIV infection for catching or passing on hep C - even with an undetectable viral load.

GET TESTED FOR HEP C

- Ask your GP, HIV doctor or Sexual Health Clinic nurse when you have your regular STI screen to add a hep C blood test.
- If the results show you have hep C, ask to be referred to a doctor or clinic where they specialise in the management of hep C.

GET TREATED

- Hep C diagnosis and treatment has significantly improved in recent years.
- New treatments are highly effective and becoming less invasive, shorter, simpler and easier to tolerate.
- Hep C can be cleared from the body with treatment, but treatment does not prevent you getting re-infected.
- Treating hep C early increases your prospects for better health in the long term.
- Having HIV and hep C together can make managing your health more complicated, but treatments are much better tolerated and compatible with HIV medication than previous options.

REduce YOUR RISK

- Always use a sterile needle and don’t share equipment.
- Change condoms and gloves between each arse.
- Wash your hands with soap between glove and condom changes.
- Use non-latex gloves - allergies to latex are common with the reaction increasing the risk of skin damage.
- Wash toys between each arse with warm soapy water. Hot water can clump the blood protecting the virus.
- Ensure your host has cleaned their toys and you have cleaned your toys from any previous sessions.
- Don’t share lube containers. Use pump action contains or keep containers clean with soapy water.
- Being vaccinated for hepatitis A, B and HPV.
- Have regular STI testing including blood tests for syphilis and hep C.

MORE INFORMATION

www.positivelife.org.au
free call 1800 245 677

“The sooner you know your hep C status and get treated, the better your outcome will be.”

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