

# Hepatitis C Testing and Treatment in Jails: A Guide for Law Enforcement



## What is hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is a virus, spread through blood-to-blood contact. There is no vaccine for hepatitis C, but it is easily curable with medication. If it is left untreated it can cause liver damage, cirrhosis, and death. It is the leading cause of liver transplants in the U.S.

## Who is at risk?

Hepatitis C is most common among Baby Boomers (1945-1965) and people who use or inject drugs.

## What do you need to know about hepatitis C testing and treatment?

- Identifying hepatitis C infections can help keep law enforcement safe if there is a workplace exposure.
- Rapid tests only take 20 minutes to process and are user-friendly. Additional testing can be done with one blood draw.
- While most people are only in jail custody for a short period of time, people with longer sentences can complete hepatitis C treatment in 2–3 months. There are multiple options to pay for hepatitis C treatment.
- Testing and treatment mean safer communities for everyone!

## What are recommendations for the future?



Discuss testing and treatment with your jail administrators, health care team, and health care contractors.



Talk with the DHS Hepatitis C Program about pre-release planning services: [emily.hacker@dhs.wi.gov](mailto:emily.hacker@dhs.wi.gov)



Have all staff and inmates vaccinated against hepatitis A and B.



Join the Hepatitis C Elimination Planning Group. Everyone's voice is important: [DHSHepatitisEliminationPlan@dhs.wi.gov](mailto:DHSHepatitisEliminationPlan@dhs.wi.gov)

