



Your Liver. Your Life.

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HEPATITIS C – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Hepatitis C is the most common chronic blood borne infection in the U.S.

July 8, 2009 (Denver, CO)—The American Liver Foundation is promoting awareness of the disease, Hepatitis C—the most common chronic blood borne infection in the United States.

Hepatitis C is a serious viral infection of the liver caused by the Hepatitis C virus (HCV). There is currently no vaccine available to prevent this disease. HCV is a serious, long-term condition that causes inflammation of the liver and can lead to potentially fatal liver diseases such as cirrhosis and cancer. However, with early detection and proper management, many HCV patients can lead full and active lives.

“Anyone who comes in contact with blood from someone who already has the Hepatitis C virus could become infected themselves,” said Regina Musyl, the Division Vice President of the American Liver Foundation, Rocky Mountain Division. “There are many ways people may unknowingly come in contact with the disease and people can become infected with HCV despite their positive, healthy lifestyle.”

. The most common causes of transmission include:

- Needle sticks – as a healthcare, emergency medical and public safety worker
- Blood transfusion or organ transplant prior to 1992
- Intravenous drug use – even once

Less common causes of transmission include:

- Tattooing or body piercing in unsanitary conditions
- Household exposure – sharing a razor or toothbrush with an HCV infected person
- Unprotected sex – with multiple partners or having a history of sexually transmitted disease

If you think you have been exposed to the blood of an infected person, the American Liver Foundation encourages you to talk to your doctor about a simple blood test to identify if you have contracted the Hepatitis C virus.

The American Liver Foundation urges you to learn what can be done to prevent the spread of HCV and what to do if you already have the disease. HCV is a dangerous disease but through education, prevention and early treatment many lives can be saved.

Join the American Liver Foundation as we raise awareness about liver disease at the Liver Life Walk taking place on August 9, 2009 at Washington Park in Denver and on August 15, 2009 at Memorial Park in Colorado Springs. Register at www.liverfoundation.org/walk.

For more information on Hepatitis C and other liver diseases, please visit the American Liver Foundation website at www.liverfoundation.org or call the toll free help line at 1-800-GO-LIVER (1-800-465-4837).

The American Liver Foundation is devoted to liver health and disease prevention. Our mission is to facilitate, advocate and promote education, support and research for the prevention, treatment and cure of liver disease.

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