

DISEASE PROGRESSION

Acute HCV

HCV is spread by blood-to-blood contact. The most common transmission route of HCV is from sharing HCV-infected needles (for drugs, hormones, vitamins) and works (cookers, cotton, ties, water). You can also get HCV from having an unsafe tattoo or piercing. Generally, sexual transmission is uncommon in straight people, but there have been high rates of sexual transmission among HIV positive gay men and HIV positive men who have sex with men. If you have been exposed to HCV get tested. If you have HIV get tested for HCV.

Acute HCV is the first stage of infection. Most people with acute HCV infection have few or no symptoms. But some people have symptoms that include feeling tired, achy all over, fever, night sweats, nausea, and headaches. In severe cases people can have yellowing of the eyes and skin, coca cola-colored urine (pee) and clay-colored stools (poop).

After the acute phase of HCV most people will go on to have long term infection called chronic. Breaking it down: If 100 people have acute HCV about 25 or 25% of the people will fight off the infection and not have any future problems. But for the other 75 or 75% of the people the HCV infection will continue on to chronic infection. In people with HIV the number of people who will continue on to chronic HCV is higher. This is because the immune system doesn't work as well to fight off HCV.


The good news is that most people with acute infection can be cured with HCV medications including people who are infected with HIV.

educate yourself

Check this out:

- HCV is spread by blood to blood contact
- The most common way people get HCV is from sharing needle and works
- People who have HIV are more likely to get HCV from sex especially if there is blood involved during sex (anal sex, fisting)
- If you have a risk factor for HCV—get tested
- If you have HIV—get tested for HCV
- Acute HCV can be treated and cured—seek medical care and work closely with you doctor or nurse

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