

Piercings and HCV

EASY C FACTS

There is a real chance that a person could get hepatitis C (HCV or Hep C for short) while having a piercing if safety practices are not followed very carefully.

The chance of getting hepatitis C from a piercing is considered a low risk, but if you had a piercing in any setting where safety precautions were not followed carefully – for instance, from a friend or on the street – it might be a good

idea to get tested for hepatitis C.

If you decide to get a body piercing be sure to go to a commercial piercing studio that pays close attention to safety. You may want to ask them if you can watch while they set up a piercing or they may even let you watch while they are working on someone else. This way you can see that they are closely following safety procedures.

We recommend that people get a piercing in a commercial piercing studio that practices the following safety measures:

- ◆ Sterilize any equipment that may come into contact with blood
- ◆ Only use new needles. All needles should be individually wrapped and the packages should be opened in front of you
- ◆ The shop is clean and all surfaces are disinfected
- ◆ Use only new safety gloves
- ◆ Dispose of all equipment that may have come into contact with blood; use a “sharps” bin or a puncture-proof container
- ◆ Never get a piercing with a piercing gun
- ◆ Visit www.safepiercing.org for more information to keep you safe

www.hcvadvocate.org