



Hepatitis C: By the Numbers

Hepatitis C is among the deadliest infectious diseases in the United States. In 2019, approximately 14,242 death certificates listed hepatitis C as an underlying or contributing cause of death in the United States and the number of people newly infected has risen dramatically in recent years, coinciding with the nation's opioid crisis.

Treatment is available and most people with hepatitis C can be cured, but only if they know they are infected. This is why everyone age 18 and over should get tested [at least once in their life](#), and people with ongoing risk factors should be tested regularly.

TO REVERSE AND END THE HEPATITIS C EPIDEMIC, EVERYONE MUST BE AWARE OF THEIR STATUS

CDC estimates that 2.4 million Americans — approximately 1 percent of the adult population — were living with hepatitis C during 2013–2016.



APPROXIMATELY

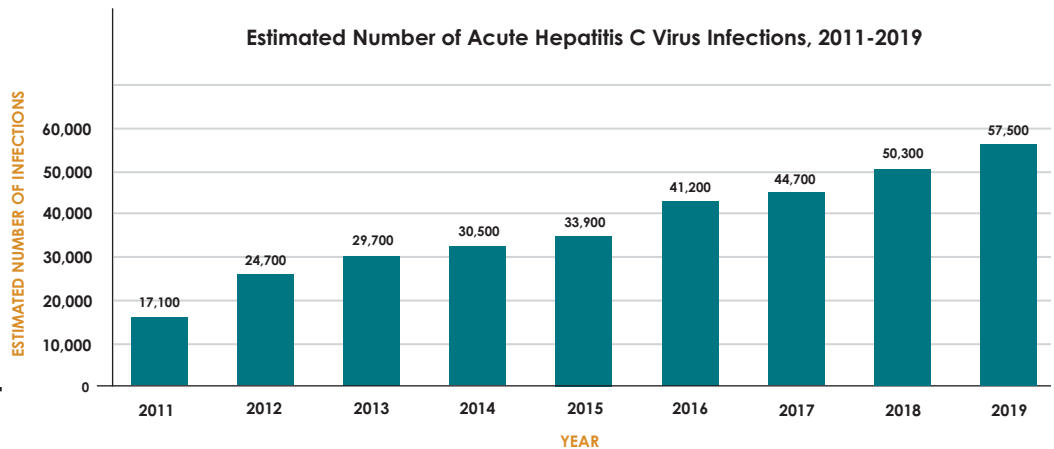
4 IN 10 PEOPLE

with hepatitis C in the United States do not know they have it, which means that they can't access lifesaving treatment.

NEW HEPATITIS C VIRUS INFECTIONS ARE ALMOST

4X AS HIGH

as they were nearly a decade ago.



Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Viral Hepatitis Surveillance - United States, 2019.*

Some parts of the United States are especially hard hit by hepatitis C

SEVEN STATES (FLORIDA, INDIANA, NEW YORK, OHIO, PENNSYLVANIA, TENNESSEE, AND CALIFORNIA)

represented more than half of all reported cases of acute hepatitis C nationally in 2019 — and four of the seven states are in Appalachia.



ACUTE HEPATITIS C

is a new infection that occurs within the first 6 months after someone is exposed to the hepatitis C virus, often not showing any symptoms. Hepatitis C can be a short-term illness, but for most people, acute infection leads to chronic infection.



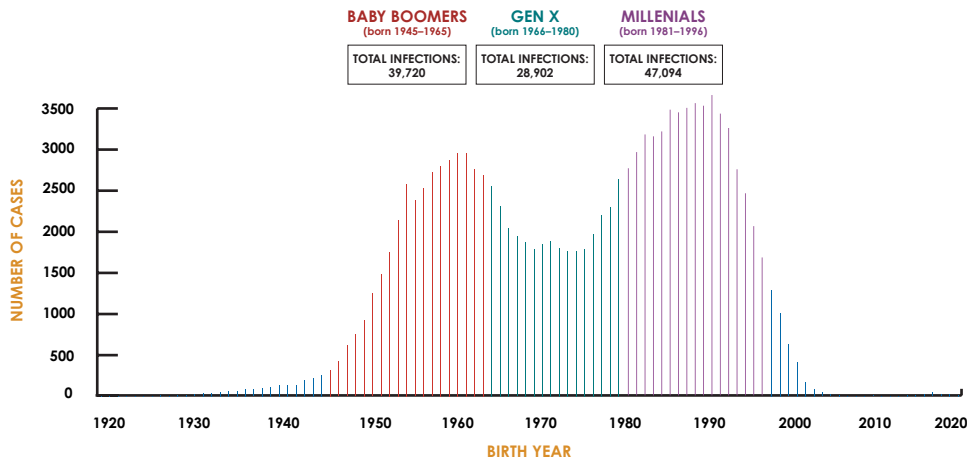
CHRONIC HEPATITIS C

can be a “silent” lifelong and life-threatening infection. Left untreated, chronic hepatitis C can cause serious health problems, including liver damage, cirrhosis (scarring of the liver), liver cancer, and even death.



HEPATITIS C AFFECTS EVERY GENERATION

New Reports of Chronic Hepatitis C Were High Across Multiple Generations in 2019



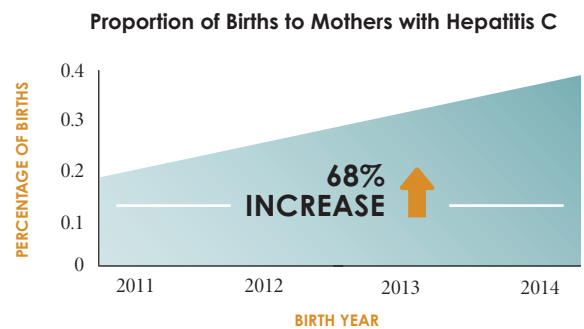
Data show that chronic hepatitis C affects every generation — underscoring new CDC recommendations that every adult should be tested at least once in their lifetime for this curable infection. Previously, hepatitis C was primarily a concern for the baby boomer generation (people born from 1945-1965), as well as people with risk factors, such as injection drug use.

High rates of hepatitis C among people of reproductive age also put the youngest generation at risk of infection because hepatitis C can be transmitted during pregnancy and childbirth.

AN INCREASING PROPORTION OF U.S. INFANTS ARE BORN TO MOTHERS WITH HEPATITIS C

The increase in hepatitis C is tied to increases in injection drug use and an overall increase in new hepatitis C among reproductive aged adults.

Source: [Koneru A, Nelson N, Hariri S, et al. Increased Hepatitis C Virus \(HCV\) Detection in Women of Childbearing Age and Potential Risk for Vertical Transmission — United States and Kentucky, 2011–2014. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2016;65:705–710.](#)



MANY AMERICANS FACE BARRIERS TO HEPATITIS C TREATMENT

Although most people with hepatitis C can be cured in as little as two to three months and with few side effects, far too many Americans are not being treated.

- **TOO FEW PEOPLE WITH HEPATITIS C ARE AWARE OF THEIR INFECTION:** Four in ten persons living with hepatitis C are not aware of their infection. As a result, a significant proportion of individuals with hepatitis C are not accessing treatment that can cure them and prevent disease progression and liver damage, including cirrhosis and liver cancer. They are also at risk of transmitting the virus to others.
- **DENIAL OF TREATMENT BY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSURANCE:** Some states and insurers [restrict eligibility](#) to hepatitis C treatment based on factors including liver damage severity and patient sobriety, and may also require a prescription by a liver disease specialist.
- **COSTS FOR TREATMENT:** Some people might be unable to access curative hepatitis C treatment because of financial restrictions or lack of health care coverage.

Expanding testing and removing barriers to treatment are key to finding and linking the millions of Americans living with this curable, but potentially deadly disease to care.



For more information visit www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/newsroom