

Living with Hepatitis C:
Getting the Information You Need

***Getting There From Here:
South Bronx Hepatitis C Task Force***

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Agenda

- DOHMH Hepatitis C Program
- S. Bronx Hepatitis C Task Force overview
- Hepatitis C Services Resource Guide
 - Methods
 - Distribution
- Patient Pocket Guide
 - Methods
 - Distribution

Objectives

- Identify need for resources for people with hepatitis C in the South Bronx
- Illustrate methods for developing two resource tools implemented by the South Bronx Hepatitis C Task Force

Hepatitis C Program Goals

- 1) Reduce the burden of disease through efforts to prevent, control and eliminate hepatitis C viral infections in New York City*
- 2) Provide up-to-date information about the hepatitis C virus (HCV)*
- 3) Examine surveillance data about its prevalence*
- 4) To develop and enhance programmatic interventions for its prevention and health care*

Initiatives

- **Community Hepatitis C Testing**
- **Integrating Hepatitis C into Existing Programs**
- **Hepatitis C in Corrections**
- **Building/Coordinating Access to Care**
- **Training/Educational Resources**
- **South Bronx Hepatitis C Task Force**

South Bronx HCV Task Force

Purpose:

- **Build the capacity of the South Bronx community to meet the needs of its residents**
- **Increase awareness and knowledge of HCV among South Bronx residents and health providers**
- **Improve access to care for people with HCV infection**

South Bronx HCV Task Force

First Year Priority Activities:

- Hepatitis C Support Group
- **Bronx Hepatitis C Resource Directory**
- **Hepatitis C Pocket Guide for Patients**
- Peer Educator Training
- Hepatitis C screening and vaccination
- Organizing medical provider education

Hepatitis C Services In the Bronx

A Referral Resource Directory Of Bronx Agencies

May 2005



New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Hepatitis C Program
125 Worth Street, Room 326
New York, NY 10013



Resource Directory of Hepatitis C Services in the Bronx

A listing of agencies located in the Bronx and their HCV services:

- Can be used in a variety of settings
- Organized into three main sections to accommodate different user needs:
 1. by type of service provided
 2. by individual agency name
 3. by agency type

Types of HCV-related services:

- Hepatitis C testing and vaccinations for hepatitis A and B
- Hepatitis C education and/or support groups
- Management and treatment of hepatitis C infection (including liver biopsy)
- Needle exchange, mental health, and substance abuse treatment services
- Enrollment in clinical trials for hepatitis C treatment
- Enrollment in Medicaid Managed Care or AIDS Drug Assistance Program

Resources Listed:

- Medical providers who manage and/or treat HCV
- Agencies that provide HCV screening, education, or counseling
- Additional services provided by either medical providers or agencies such as support groups, case management, drug treatment, and nutrition counseling
- Other information about HCV and treatment (i.e., NIH consensus guidelines)

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Alphabetical Detailed Information for Bronx Hepatitis C Providers

BRONX VA MEDICAL CENTER

www1.va.gov/visns/visn03/bronxinfo.asp

130 WEST KINGSBRIDGE ROAD-111F
BRONX, NY 10530

PHONE: (718) 584-9000, ext 5842
FAX: (718) 741-4606

HEPATITIS C PROVIDER(S): Juan Bandres, MD, Infectious Disease, HIV Specialist
Norber Brau, MD, Infectious Disease, HIV Specialist
Paul Riska, MD, Infectious Disease, HIV Specialist

TYPE OF AGENCY: Hospital
DIRECTIONS: Subway: #4; Bus: #9,#38, BX32
LANGUAGES: English, Spanish
ELIGIBILITY: Honorably discharged veterans except when enrolling in a research study, which is open to all.
PAYMENT ACCEPTED: TRICARE, ChampVA, Champus.

ON-SITE INSURANCE AND HEALTH CARE ENTITLEMENT ENROLLMENT AVAILABLE? No

WHAT TO BRING TO FIRST VISIT: DD214

SERVICES PROVIDED:	Hepatitis C screening/testing	Mental health therapy
	Hepatitis A vaccinations	Hepatitis C one-to-one counseling
	Hepatitis B vaccinations	
	HIV counseling and testing	Drug counseling
		Rehab
	Liver biopsy	Methadone maintenance treatment services
	Evaluation for interferon-based treatment (i.e., viral load, referral for biopsy)	Alcohol counseling
		Smoking cessation services
	Hepatitis C treatment with interferon-based therapy	General nutrition counseling
	Hepatitis C care without treatment	
Enrollment into clinical trials		
Hepatitis C nutrition counseling		
HIV medical care		

BEFORE BEGINNING HEPATITIS C TREATMENT:

ALCOHOL DEPENDENT CLIENTS NEED TO ABSTAIN FROM ALCOHOL FOR: 6 months.

METHADONE CLIENTS NEED TO ABSTAIN FOR: We do not require patients to be off methadone prior to hepatitis C treatment.

INJECTION DRUG USERS NEED TO ABSTAIN FOR: 6 months.

6 MONTHS ABSTINENCE IS REQUIRED FOR CRACK/COCAINE.



Process

- Subcontracted with local consulting firm
- Gathered community input
- Conducted provider survey
- Distributed guides to all service providers who work with HCV+ patients

Community Input

- Consultants conducted 2 focus groups
 1. Providers
 2. Consumers
- Every step was given the “OK” of the Task Force Subcommittee

Provider Survey

- A survey was mailed to over 1800 agencies or individual providers in the Bronx
- Additional follow-up by e-mail and telephone was conducted for those who did not respond (some multiple attempts)
- Some providers may have been inadvertently missed

Distribution

- Built database of all information collected
- Printed resource guide
- Linked to DOHMH Website

Distribution

Outside DOHMH

- All agencies in Task Force
- All agencies listed in the directory
- Bronx HIV Care Network and HIV PPG
- Providers at methadone maintenance clinics
- Distribution at community events

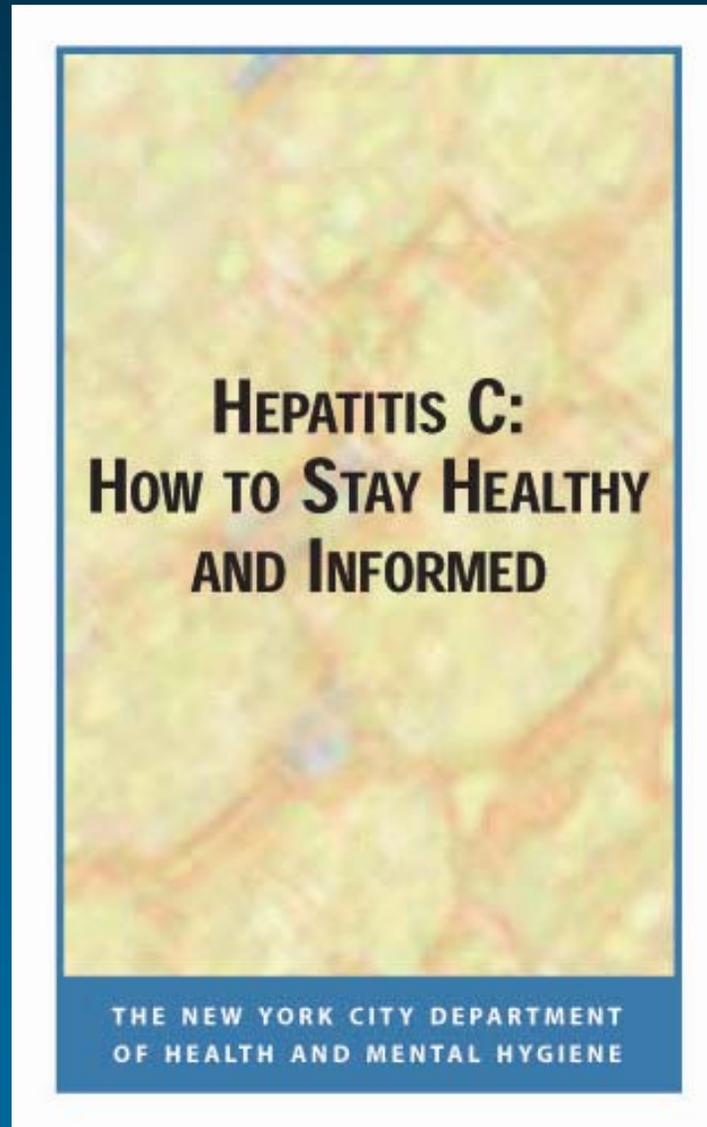
Within DOHMH and inter-agency

- STD clinics
- HIV, Transitional Health Care Coordination, and Bureau of Communicable Disease staff
- Workgroup meetings that Hep C Program staff attend
- Discharge planners at prisons and jails

Future Plans

- Collaborate with New York State DOH and Hepatitis C Coordinator to create New York State-wide Hepatitis C Resources Directory
 - Request funds
 - Collaborate with agency to tackle the work
 - Put on website, searchable

HCV Pocket Guide for Patients



HCV Pocket Guide for Patients

- English & Spanish
- Wallet-sized, folding card for individuals who have received a positive HCV test result that aids in navigating through follow-up medical services.

HCV Pocket Guide for Patients

WHAT DOES A POSITIVE ANTIBODY TEST MEAN?

The first test people usually get for hepatitis C is an antibody test. Your body makes antibodies to fight germs. If your test is positive, it means you have been infected with the hepatitis C virus. Other tests are necessary to see:

- If you still have the virus in your body.
- What type of hepatitis C virus you have (genotype).
- The condition of your liver.

THE MOST IMPORTANT NEXT TEST: THE VIRUS TEST

There are 2 types of virus tests. One tells you if the virus is still in your body; the other type tells you *how much* virus is in your body (viral load). Your provider will decide which virus test to order.

IF YOUR VIRUS TEST IS NEGATIVE

This usually means that your body has cleared the virus on its own, and that you should:

- Get another test in 6 months to confirm that there is still no virus in your body.
- Take measures to protect yourself from getting infected in the future.

IF YOUR VIRUS TEST IS POSITIVE

This means the hepatitis C virus is still in your body, and you could:

- Develop liver damage over time.
- Pass the virus on to others through blood-to-blood contact.
- Be a candidate for treatment.

Treatment for hepatitis C consists of two medications taken together (interferon and ribavirin), and can improve the health of your liver.

To make treatment recommendations, your provider will need to order more tests to assess the condition of your liver.

HCV Pocket Guide for Patients

OTHER TESTS YOU MAY NEED

GENOTYPE

Genotype is the type of hepatitis C virus you have. It is important to know your genotype because different types of hepatitis C respond differently to treatment.

LIVER ENZYME TEST

If your liver is inflamed, it may release chemicals called liver enzymes. Because you can have significant liver disease even when your liver enzymes are normal, providers often use additional tests to get the best picture of your liver health.

LIVER BIOPSY

A liver biopsy involves using a thin needle to remove a tiny piece of your liver. It is the best way to tell exactly how much damage has been done to your liver.

ULTRASOUND

An ultrasound takes pictures that tell you the size and texture of your liver, and if you have tumors in your liver or fluid in your belly.

VIRAL LOAD

The amount of virus does not always coincide with the amount of liver damage. This test helps your provider decide how you might respond to treatment and is used to monitor your progress on treatment.

VIRUS TEST(S)

Date: ____/____/____

Virus Present: ___ Yes ___ No

Date: ____/____/____

Viral Load: _____

GENOTYPE

Date: ____/____/____

Genotype: _____

BIOPSY

Date: ____/____/____

Stage: _____ (out of _____)

Grade: _____ (out of _____)

Process

- Used same consulting firm
- Gathered Community Input
 - Conducted 2 focus groups
 - Engaged Task Force Subcommittee
- Created first draft
- Reviewed by medical experts in the S. Bronx
- Printed in English and Spanish
- Distributed to all providers who work with individuals who get HCV antibody test

Distribution

- Sent out citywide to DOHMH contracted agencies, health clinics, drug treatment and SEPs
- Targeted medical providers by adding a tear out sample of the card inside CHI bulletin that will be distributed citywide to medical providers Jan. 2006
- Targeted specialty departments at city hospitals

Future Plans

- Evaluate utilization
- Update regularly
- Create for HBV

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South Bronx Hepatitis C Task Force