

PERINATAL HEPATITIS C



Department of
Public Health

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

A Guide for Prenatal Care and Pediatric Providers

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Perinatal Hepatitis C Program (PHCP) was established in 2016. The program follows all Hepatitis C (Hep C) positive pregnant and postpartum persons to offer guidance and linkage to services such as Hep C treatment. All infants born with an exposure to Hep C are followed until adequate testing has occurred.

OVERVIEW

5.8% of infants born to Hep C positive persons become infected.



There is no pre- or post- exposure prophylaxis for Hep C to prevent vertical transmission.

PHILLY FACTS

~100 persons are Hep C (+) and pregnant each year in Philadelphia.

67% of infants born 2016-2020 to Hep C (+) persons were tested for Hep C by 24 months of age.

ALL PREGNANT PERSONS SHOULD BE TESTED:

All pregnant persons should be screened for Hepatitis C Antibody (Hep C Ab) & if positive tested for Hep C RNA. Testing should be repeated before delivery if there is continued risk for Hep C exposure. Risks include history of drug use, unprotected sex, unlicensed tattoos, & being born to a Hep C positive birthing person.

PRENATAL CARE PROVIDERS

If pregnant person is Hep C Ab (+)

- They have been exposed to Hep C.
- Test for Hep C RNA to confirm infection.
- Report Hep C Ab (+) result & pregnancy to PHCP.

If pregnant person is Hep C RNA (+)

- They are currently infected with Hep C and there is risk of vertical transmission to child!
- Refer them immediately to a Hep C specialist for access to treatment and cure.
- Inform the birthing hospital and pediatrician.
- Counsel them on behaviors to prevent Hep C transmission to others.

If pregnant person is Hep C RNA (-)

- They are not currently infected with Hep C.
- Counsel them on behaviors to prevent reinfection
- Repeat RNA testing if there is continued risk exposure during pregnancy.

PEDIATRIC PROVIDERS

test children of Hep C (+) persons*

Test at 2-6 months of age

- Test perinatally exposed infants for Hep C RNA at age 2-6 months.

7-17 months of age

- If not tested previously by 7 months, test for Hep C RNA at age 7-17 months.

18 months of age or older

- If not tested previously by 18 months, test for Hep C Ab; testing Hep C Ab before 18 months of age will reflect residual Hep C Ab from the birthing person.
- If Hep C Ab (+), follow-up with a test for Hep C RNA to confirm infection.

- **If an infant tests Hep C RNA (-) at ≥ 2 months of age, they do not require further follow-up unless clinically warranted**
- **If an infant tests Hep C RNA (+) report to PHCP and refer child to a pediatric Hep C specialist!**

QUICK HEP C TESTING GUIDE

| Hep C Positive | Previously Exposed to Hep C | No Exposure to Hep C |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Hep C Ab (+) & Hep C RNA (+) | Hep C Ab (+) & Hep C RNA (-) | Hep C Ab (-) & Hep C RNA (-) |

*Please refer to CDC guidelines at <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.rr7204a1> for further information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: CALL 215-685-6849 OR VISIT: WWW.PHILLYHEPATITIS.ORG

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ALL PREGNANT PERSONS*
Test for Hepatitis C Antibody (Hep C Ab)

Hep C Ab
+

They have been exposed to Hep C.

Test for Hep C RNA
to confirm infection

Hep C
RNA (+)

- They are currently infected with Hep C and there is risk of vertical transmission to child.
- Refer them to Hep C specialist immediately.

Hep C
RNA (-)

- They are not currently infected with Hep C.
- Repeat RNA testing if there is continued risk of exposure to Hep C during pregnancy.

Hep C Ab
-

- They have not been exposed to Hep C.
- Repeat Hep C Ab testing if there is continued risk of exposure to Hep C.

*Test during every pregnancy. Repeat testing if there is continued risk. See reverse for risk factors.

CHILDREN OF HEP C-POSITIVE PERSONS
Test for Hep C Infection

PEDIATRIC HEP C TESTING RECOMMENDATIONS*

| AGE OF CHILD | ACTION |
|---------------------------|---|
| 2-6 months of age | Test for Hep C RNA |
| 7-17 months of age | If not previously tested by 7 months of age, test for Hep C RNA |
| 18 months of age or older | If not previously tested by 18 months of age, test for Hep C Ab. If Hep C Ab (+) test for Hep C RNA to confirm. |

*Please refer to CDC guidelines at <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.r7204a1> for further information.