



## DHD#10 URGES INDIVIDUALS TO SEEK PROTECTION AGAINST VIRAL HEPATITIS

July 26, 2021 – One person every 30 seconds dies from a hepatitis-related illness and 290 million people are currently living with viral hepatitis yet are unaware they have it.

World Hepatitis Day, July 28, 2021, urges that “**Hepatitis Can’t Wait**”:

- People unaware that they are living with viral hepatitis **can’t wait** for testing.
- People living with hepatitis **can’t wait** for life saving treatments.
- Pregnant women **can’t wait** for hepatitis screening and treatment.
- Newborn babies **can’t wait** for birth dose vaccination.
- People affected by hepatitis **can’t wait** to end stigma and discrimination.
- Community organizations **can’t wait** for greater investment.
- Decision makers **can’t wait** and must act now to make hepatitis elimination a reality.

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver, most commonly caused by a viral infection. There are five different types of hepatitis, A, B, C, D, and E though hepatitis A, B, and C are the most prevalent in Michigan. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), these three types of hepatitis can be described as followed:

- **Hepatitis A** is a vaccine-preventable liver infection found in the stool and blood of infected people. It is highly contagious and typically spreads through eating food or drink contaminated with feces or from close, personal contact with an infected person such as certain types of sexual contact, using and sharing drug-injecting equipment, or caring for someone who is ill. Most people with hepatitis A do not have long-lasting illness.
- **Hepatitis B** is a vaccine-preventable liver infection that is spread when blood, semen, or other body fluids from an infected person enters the body of someone who is not infected by way of sexual contact, using and sharing drug-injecting equipment, or from mother to baby at birth. For many, hepatitis B is a short-term illness, but for others it can become a long-term, chronic infection that can be life-threatening.
- **Hepatitis C** is a liver infection spread through contact with blood from an infected person. Most people are infected by using and sharing drug-injecting equipment. For some it is a short-term illness, but for more than half of those with hepatitis C, it becomes a long-term, chronic illness. There currently is no vaccine for hepatitis C, but there are treatments if individuals get tested within the first 8 to 12 weeks of infection.

The best and most effective way to protect and prevent the spread of hepatitis A and B is through vaccination. Schedule a vaccination appointment with your health care provider or call 888-217-3904 to get in contact with your local DHD#10 office!

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### MEDIA CONTACT

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