



WORLD HEPATITIS DAY IS JULY 28, 2023

July 20, 2023 – District Health Department #10 (DHD#10) and the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA) are recognizing World Hepatitis Day (WHD), which raises awareness about viral hepatitis and the steps people can take to prevent and manage this disease. DHD#10 **offers vaccines for hepatitis A and B and free hepatitis C screening and testing, including rapid antibody hepatitis C testing.** For more information or help with scheduling a visit, call us at 888-217-3904. Michigan’s Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) offers low-cost hepatitis C treatment through their [“We Treat Hep C” program](#).

“The COVID-19 pandemic has slowed global efforts to fight hepatitis,” said Kevin Hughes, DHD#10 Health Officer. “People living with hepatitis are at increased risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19, making it more important than ever for people to seek hepatitis prevention and treatment.”

There are at least five types of hepatitis. The three most common in the United States are hepatitis A, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Hepatitis A is easily transmitted from person to person. It causes an acute infection that usually improves without treatment. Hepatitis B and hepatitis C can be spread through sex or sharing needles. They can cause a chronic infection, which can lead to liver disease. There is a vaccine to prevent hepatitis A and B. There is not one for hepatitis C. Viral hepatitis is a global public health threat. About 290 million people worldwide are living with chronic hepatitis B or C.

According to the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), hepatitis is a group of viral infections that lead to a range of health problems, such as liver cirrhosis, liver cancer, and liver failure. More than 1.4 million deaths per year are caused by hepatitis B and C alone. WHO has set a goal of ending viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030. Reaching this goal requires increased awareness, prevention, testing, and treatment. Some of the key steps people can take to prevent hepatitis are getting vaccinated, practicing safe sex, and avoiding sharing needles or other drug paraphernalia.

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