

Wednesday, 03 November 2021

[Health Protection](#)



Hepatitis C positive, PCR positive Clinician results factsheet

The enclosed report indicates that your patient is antibody positive, and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) positive, and therefore has hepatitis C infection. This indicates active virus replication and if it becomes chronic there is a risk of developing serious liver disease.

A further specimen of clotted blood has been requested for repeat antibody testing and genotyping of the virus. If you need additional explanation of the result, please phone the laboratory (see Further information on the back page).

What is hepatitis C?

- A disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV), which is a blood-borne virus spread mainly through blood-to-blood contact.
- Only 20% of patients infected with HCV clear the virus spontaneously. The remaining 80% have chronic HCV infection (PCR positive), which if not treated can lead to severe liver disease, with 20% of these developing cirrhosis after 20 years.
- Those with cirrhosis are at risk of liver failure and hepatocellular carcinoma.
- Symptoms can take years or decades to occur so the majority of those infected are probably unaware of it.

Who is at risk and should be tested?

Hepatitis C testing should be offered to anyone who:

- has unexplained abnormal liver function tests, for example, elevated ALT or unexplained jaundice;
- has injected drugs, including image and performance enhancing drugs like anabolic steroids, using shared equipment, however long ago and even if only once or twice;
- had a blood transfusion in the UK before September 1991 or received any blood products in the UK before 1986;
- has received medical or dental treatment in countries where infection control may have been poor;
- is the child of a mother with hepatitis C;

This factsheet provides information in the form of FAQs in relation to hepatitis C: the condition, risks, testing, treatment and management.

Details

Format

4 page A5 factsheet

Target group

Health professionals

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Attachment

Size

[Hepatitis C - clinician results factsheet 1121](#) 278.11 KB

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