

Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Screening

CHILD AND TEEN CHECKUPS (C&TC) FACT SHEET FOR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS

C&TC Requirements

General

Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) screening is recommended once during C&TC visits for young adults aged 18 and older.

Personnel

A licensed health care provider (physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant) must interpret the results of HCV screening and ensure appropriate follow-up testing if needed.

Documentation

Document the HCV screening lab test order. It is not necessary to have a complete record of laboratory test results on the documentation forms. Test results may be elsewhere in the chart, but documentation forms should indicate where this information can be found.

For documentation examples, refer to the [C&TC Provider Documentation Forms \(mn.gov/dhs\)](https://mn.gov/dhs).

Procedure

Screen for HCV infection using a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved anti-HCV laboratory test. If anti-HCV testing results are positive/reactive, ensure follow-up testing with an FDA-approved nucleic acid test (NAT) to detect HCV RNA (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).

For more information, refer to the [Recommended Testing Sequence for Identifying Current Hepatitis C Virus \(HCV\) Infection \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/c/faq-identifying-current-hcv-infection.html).

Importance of HCV Screening

HCV is the most common blood-borne pathogen in the U.S. and can lead to complications from chronic liver disease (Chou, et al., 2020). In the last decade, the greatest increase in acute HCV infection was in young adults aged 20 to 39 who inject drugs (Chou, et al., 2020; U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, 2020).

In Minnesota, 33,856 individuals were known to be living with HCV infection in 2018 (Minnesota Department of Health, 2022).

Compared to past treatment, current HCV treatment has fewer risks and increased benefits, including reduced long-term health complications (U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, 2020). Screening earlier in life increases the likelihood of detecting earlier stages of the disease, maximizing the potential impact of treatment (U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, 2020).

Professional Recommendations

American Academy of Pediatrics

Screening for HCV infection should occur at least once between newborn and 21 years of age (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2021).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

HCV screening should occur at least once for all adults 18 years and older. This screening should occur in all settings except those where the prevalence of HCV infection (HCV RNA-positivity) is less than 0.1%. Most settings will not have performed sufficient testing to calculate their HCV prevalence. Settings without HCV prevalence data should initiate universal HCV screening (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF)

USPSTF recommends screening for HCV infection at least once between 18 and 79 years (U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, 2020).

Resources

Minnesota Department of Human Services

- [C&TC Schedule of Age-Related Screening Standards \(dhs.state.mn.us\)](https://dhs.state.mn.us)
- [Minnesota Health Care Programs \(MHCP\) Provider Manual - C&TC Section \(dhs.state.mn.us\)](https://dhs.state.mn.us)

Minnesota Department of Health

- [Child and Teen Checkups \(C&TC\) \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us)
- [Hepatitis C \(health.state.mn.us\)](https://health.state.mn.us)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Testing Recommendations for Hepatitis C Virus Infection \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov)

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force

- [Hepatitis C Virus Infection in Adolescents and Adults: Screening \(uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org\)](https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org)

References

- American Academy of Pediatrics. (2021). *Recommendations for Preventive Pediatric Health Care*. Retrieved from Bright Futures: downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity_schedule.pdf
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). *Testing Recommendations for Hepatitis C Virus Infection*. Retrieved from Viral Hepatitis: www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/guidelinesc.htm
- Chou, R., Dana, T., Rongwei, F., Zakher, B., Wagner, J., Ramirez, S., . . . Jou, J. (2020). Screening for Hepatitis C Virus Infection in Adolescents and Adults. *JAMA*, 323(10), 976-991. doi:10.1001/jama.2019.20788
- Minnesota Department of Health. (2022). *Chronic Hepatitis C Infection Statistics*. Retrieved from Minnesota Department of Health: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/hepatitis/c/stats/current.html
- U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. (2020). Screening for Hepatitis C Virus Infection in Adolescents and Adults. *JAMA*, 323(10), 970-975. doi:10.1001/jama.2020.1123

For More Information

The Child and Teen Checkups (C&TC) program is administered through a partnership between the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Department of Health.

For questions about this fact sheet or to obtain this information in a different format, call 651-201-3650 or email health.childteencheckups@state.mn.us.

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