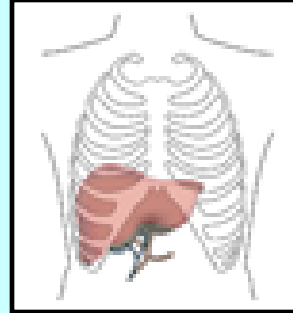


HEPATITIS HEALTH



October is Liver Awareness Month

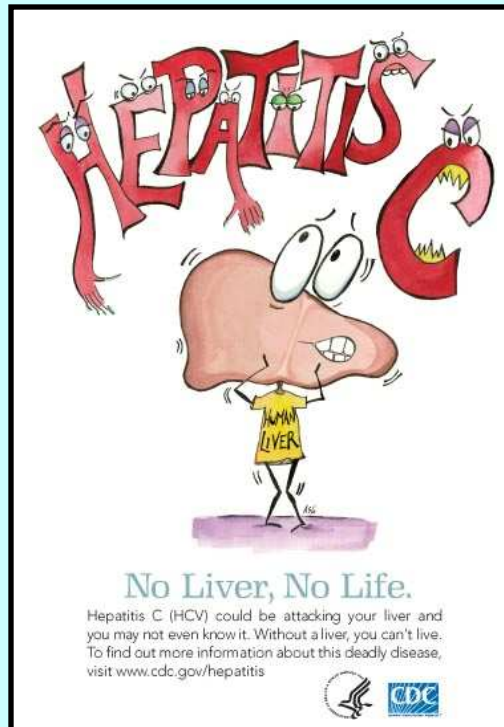
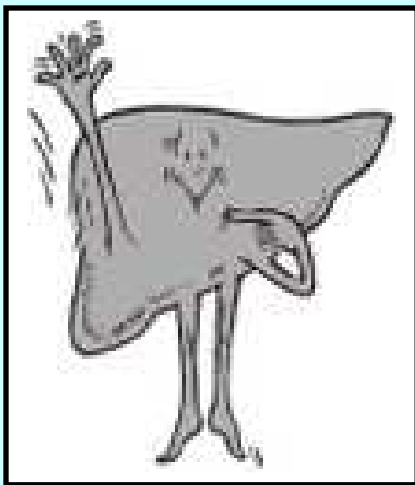


According to the American Liver Foundation, over 25 million Americans, one in every 10, are affected by some form of liver disease. The goal of *Liver Awareness Month* is to educate people on the function of the liver and to explain health problems associated with the liver.

The liver is one of the most important organs in your body. It serves as an internal chemical power plant and acts as a huge filter that gets rid of waste and other harmful substances. The liver has over 500 vital functions and is involved in many digestive, vascular and metabolic activities. Basically, the liver processes everything you eat, drink, swallow, breathe and/or absorb.

Some of the most frequently diagnosed liver diseases are hepatitis, cirrhosis and fatty liver. The word "hepatitis" means inflammation of the liver. Toxins, certain drugs, some diseases, heavy alcohol use, bacterial and viral infections can all cause hepatitis. Hepatitis is also the name of a family of viral infections that affect the liver; the most common types in the United States are hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C.

When you go to bed tonight, be sure to thank your liver for a job well done!



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ∞ Liver Month
- ∞ Hepatitis Leadership Summit
- ∞ Broward Participates in World Hepatitis Day
- ∞ What's New in Hepatitis Prevention?
- ∞ Vaccine Non-Responders



Name that Tune!

I'm so glad
He found me in
time
And, I'm so glad
that
He rectified my
mind

Answer: Page 9



Leadership Summit Provides Hepatitis Messages

By Phil Reichert

Camera Man

The 2008 Viral Hepatitis Health Leadership Summit took place in Baltimore, Maryland, on June 20. It was sponsored by Hepatitis Foundation International (www.hepfi.org) and Chief Executive Officer Thelma Thiel opened the summit with her usual flair, giving an informative and entertaining talk on living with a healthy liver. Carinna Dan, Chief Operating Officer of HFI, provided information on hepatitis to an audience made up of both public health professionals and health care workers from as far away as California.

Leonard Seeff, a medical doctor and researcher with the National Institutes of Health, stated that about 1.6% of the United States population is infected with hepatitis C, which equates to about 4.1 million infected Americans. Regarding treatment for hepatitis C virus (HCV), he further stated that the response rate for the standard pegylated interferon and ribavirin is about 80% for genotypes two and three but only 30% to 50% for genotype one infected individuals. Interestingly, blacks have a lower response rate for treatment for HCV. Dr. Seeff said that researchers are not sure why but are studying this data artifact. Individuals who have completed treatment and have a sustained viral response should continue to be screened, even though many doctors are calling pegylated interferon and robovirin a "cure."

Edward Marino, a physician's assistant who works in hepatology and assists with liver transplants, said that the hepatitis C genotypes are like "different branches on the same tree." Twenty percent of the people who become infected with HCV will clear it without treatment. Marino stated that steatohepatitis, or fatty liver, is likely to be the next epidemic in liver disease. According to him, steatohepatitis patients may or may not be overweight, they may or may not have high cholesterol and their livers often become scarred with fibrosis and cirrhosis. "This is the most common and least understood type of hepatitis, and no lab analysis helps a lot," said Marino.

Dr. John Ward, Director of the Division of Viral Hepatitis at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), spoke about CDC's future directions for hepatitis prevention, viral hepatitis in the United States and initiatives and strategies for reducing disease incidence.

In a breakout session led by Kathy White, a nurse and the Adult Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinator for the state of Nebraska, health promotion and risk control were discussed. Being infected with additional diseases and conditions, or co-infections, is a barrier for individuals infected with viral hepatitis. Those additional conditions discussed included HIV, other viral infections, including being infected with both hepatitis B and C at the same time, and using alcohol and other drugs associated with substance abuse. Further, White stated that acetaminophen and statin drugs, both very common in the US, pose risks to individuals infected with hepatitis. She stated that proper health education, medication management, nutrition counseling, sleep enhancement and physician support are important components of good health promotion.

Glenn Treisman, a physician and professor with the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, spoke of the management of depression and psychological issues associated with hepatitis C and its treatment. He said, "The evaluation of psychiatric disorders should be part of the initial workup for [hepatitis C treatment]." Depression is not only associated with interferon therapy, it is associated with over 57% of individuals who have hepatitis C and are active drug users. Treisman quoted William Osler: "It is much more important to know what sort of patient has a disease than what sort of disease a patient has."

Broward Participates in World Hepatitis Day

Submitted by Edith Garcia

The first ever global World Hepatitis Day was held on Monday, May 19, 2008, and the Broward County Health Department (CHD) honored the occasion by hosting educational booths and offering free testing at each of their locations from May 19th—28th.



Left to right: Gloria Christian, Audrey Meares, Edith Garcia and Cynthia Rouse



Harold Levine - Levine & Partners, Inc.

On Saturday, April 12th and Sunday, April 13th, the Broward CHD's Hepatitis Program joined with Levine & Partners, Inc., from New York City, to form "HEP TEAM USA." This unique collaboration provided free hepatitis vaccines and educational information at Pride Fest South Florida.

Pride Fest South Florida is the largest Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender festival in the state. Nearly 85,000 attended the event which was held at Holiday Park/War Memorial Auditorium in Fort Lauderdale.

Although this was the first time hepatitis vaccines were given at Pride South Florida, 147 vaccines were ultimately provided. A number of persons first vaccinated at the week-end event have subsequently returned to the Broward CHD for follow-up vaccines. This event was deemed a huge success by all who participated.



What's New in Hepatitis Prevention?

By Phil Reichert


Dr. John Ward from the CDC presented at the 2008 Viral Hepatitis Leadership Summit in Baltimore in June. Dr. Ward is the Director of the Division of Viral Hepatitis, which is a part of CDC's National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention in Atlanta. His "take home" messages were that 1) Viral hepatitis continues to be a major public health problem in the US, 2) Vaccine availability has reduced disparities in those infected with hepatitis B and, 3) The latest public health recommendations have helped ensure that prevention activities are evolving to meet challenges.

From 1985 through 2006, there was an 80% decline in hepatitis B incidence, mainly due to the recommendation for the universal vaccination of infants beginning in 1990. In spite of the decline in acute viral hepatitis cases in the US, there continues to be 11,000–15,000 viral hepatitis related deaths in the US each year. According to Dr. Ward, the disparity of hepatitis B in the Asian and black communities was reduced significantly between 1997 and 2005. There are approximately 1–1.4 million chronic hepatitis B infections in the US with about 46,000 new cases per year.

Ward said there are about 3.2 million chronic hepatitis C infections in the US with around 8,000-10,000 deaths per year. He stated that disparities exist between whites and blacks when it comes to the hepatitis C virus (HCV). "The prevalence of HCV infection among African-Americans is 2-3 times higher than that among whites," he said. Also, studies show that the standard treatment for HCV is less likely to succeed in blacks. Dr. Ward said there is further investigation going on to determine the specifics of this disparity.

In order to eliminate hepatitis B in the US, Dr. Ward said that universal infant vaccination and vaccination of adults at risk would accomplish this. He laid out a timeline of activities that began with routine hepatitis B virus (HBV) screening of pregnant females in 1988, universal infant vaccination in 1992, as well as vaccinating adults at risk. You are likely to find at-risk adults in public health department STD clinics, in jails and prisons and at substance abuse treatment centers.

Dr. Ward said all of the approximately 4.5 million people in the US with viral hepatitis need to know their status in order to protect themselves and others. Many do not know they are infected. Infected individuals need to have access to health care (one of the huge barriers blocking hepatitis elimination). And, we need to "build surveillance systems to guide prevention" activities. He stated that funding for the 317 Vaccine Initiative, which provides HBV vaccine for adults at risk, would probably be available through at least 2009. He has a vision that we will reduce or eliminate racial and ethnic disparities regarding viral hepatitis, and that we will better protect vulnerable populations (like infants and individuals with no health insurance).



Dr. John Ward (2nd from left) along with Thelma Thiel (on Dr. Ward's right) The rest of the group are some of the Hepatitis Coordinators who attended the 2008 Hepatitis Leadership Summit in Baltimore.

Kneeling in front: Carrina Dan from Hepatitis Foundation International and Phil Reichert.

EASY C FACTS



The Liver

The liver is the largest organ in your body. It is reddish brown and is about the size of a football. The really amazing thing about the liver is that if they took away half of the liver—it would grow back in a few weeks!

The liver is a very important organ because it filters everything you eat and breath—even things that you get on your skin. The

problem is that things such as alcohol, street drugs, cigarette smoke, toxic fumes, some herbs and even some regular medicines people buy without a doctor's prescription can damage the liver.

For some people, hepatitis C (HCV for short) can cause the liver to become sick. After a long time (usually 10 to 40 years) the liver can become so scarred that it just can't function very well.

Remember.....

- ◆ You can keep the liver healthy by stopping or reducing alcohol and street drugs. If you can't stop get some help.
- ◆ Try to eat a healthy well balanced diet that includes lots of fruits, vegetables and lean meats.
- ◆ Work closely with your doctor to make sure that you are doing everything you can to keep your liver healthy.
- ◆ Talk with your doctor about ways to stay healthy and about the medications that can rid the body of hepatitis C, and if they can help you.

www.hcvadvocate.org



Version 2.0, 2008

Ask the CDC

What is the recommendation for a healthcare worker who has been tested for hepatitis B antibodies after three doses of vaccine and the lab test shows no antibodies?

Persons who do not respond to the first series of hepatitis B vaccine should complete a second three-dose vaccine series. The second vaccine series should be given on the usual 0, 1, 6-month schedule. A 0, 1, 4-month accelerated schedule may also be used. Revaccinated healthcare workers and others for whom post-vaccination serologic testing is recommended should be retested at the completion of the second vaccine series.

Fewer than 5% of persons receiving 6 doses of hepatitis B vaccine administered by the appropriate schedule in the deltoid muscle fail to develop detectable hepatitis B surface antibodies (anti-HBs). Some persons who are anti-HBs negative following 6 doses may have **a low level of antibody that is not detected by routine serologic testing.**

One reason for persistent non-response to hepatitis B vaccine is that the person is chronically infected with hepatitis B (HBV). Persons who fail to develop detectable anti-HBs after 6 doses should be tested for the hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg). Persons who are found to be HBsAg-positive should be counseled accordingly. Vaccine non-responders who are HBsAg-negative should be considered susceptible to HBV infection and should be counseled regarding precautions to prevent HBV infection and the need to obtain hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) prophylaxis for any known or probable parenteral exposure to HBsAg-positive blood.

ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Publications/mmwr/rr/rr4618.pdf  (see page 23). (6/26/03)

CDC REDESIGNS ITS VIRAL HEPATITIS WEBSITE

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Viral Hepatitis recently redesigned its website, accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis>

The changes are designed to make it easier for people to find hepatitis information and resources quickly. The pages for hepatitis A, B, and C information have separate entry portals for members of the public and health professionals.

See page 7 for a sample of one of the CDC's hepatitis C posters.





STOP

Hepatitis C is a liver disease caused by infection with hepatitis C virus (HCV). An estimated 2.7 million Americans are infected with HCV; most are younger than 60 years old.

Most persons infected with HCV do not know it because they do not have any symptoms.

Hepatitis C can cause long-lasting liver damage, even liver cancer.



CAUTION

You should be tested for hepatitis C if you:

- Received a blood transfusion, or organ transplant before July 1992
- Ever injected illegal drugs not ordered by a doctor (even many years ago)



**ASK
Your
Doctor**

Hepatitis C can be a serious disease, but treatments are available.

A blood test can help you learn if you have hepatitis C.



HEPATITIS C
Remember to Ask Your Doctor



1-888-4HEP-CDC (1-888-443-7232) www.cdc.gov/hepatitis



Things That Won't Transmit Hepatitis C

By Charles Daniel, About.com

Sharing eating utensils does not spread the virus. Remember, spreading hepatitis C requires direct contact with infected blood, not saliva.

Kissing is not a known way to spread hepatitis C virus. This is because saliva is not an effective way to spread the virus. While some sources suggest otherwise, kissing is not high-risk for hepatitis C.

Casual contact is not a high risk way to spread hepatitis C because you don't come into direct contact with infected blood. So never let fear of hepatitis C keep you from **hugging** a friend. This goes for all types of casual contact: It's all low-risk.

Hepatitis C is not spread by **holding hands**. Hepatitis A is frequently spread through hand to hand contact and is prevented by good hand-washing practice.

Being close by while someone is **coughing and sneezing** may give you a cold or other respiratory disease, but it won't give you hepatitis C. This is because coughing and sneezing don't have direct blood to blood contact. Getting coughed or sneezed on is gross, but it won't give you hepatitis C.

Some hepatitis viruses are spread through **food and water**, but not hepatitis C. Hepatitis A is notorious for spreading through shellfish, dirty water and the fruits and vegetables washed with it.

Hepatitis C can be spread through **sexual contact**, especially rough sex (when the skin is at risk of being cut or scratched), but this is a **very low risk**. By practicing safer sex and wearing a condom properly, the risk of catching hepatitis C from sexual activity should be very low.

Some people think since **mosquitoes** can transmit malaria and yellow fever, they could probably spread HIV and hepatitis C. But, mosquitoes can't spread blood-borne diseases. So go ahead and take that nature walk.

While there is a very slight risk of spreading hepatitis C from a pregnant woman to the baby, **breastfeeding** does not spread hepatitis C. However, women should hold off when they have cracked or bleeding nipples.



About.com Health's Disease and Condition content is reviewed by Susan Olender, MD

Answer to Name that Tune!

“This Will Be (An Everlasting Love)” by Natalie Cole, from the 1975 album, *Inseparable*

Natalie Cole, 58, discovered she had **hepatitis C** during a routine visit to the doctor, but is responding well to treatment.

"Natalie has had a terrific response to her medication and is now virus negative," Dr. Graham Woolf, Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine at U.C.L.A./Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, said in a statement. "This gives her an increased chance of cure."



Natalie Cole

Still, Cole has suffered side effects from the anti-viral medicine, including fatigue, muscle aches and dehydration, but, "she is recovering from these," Woolf said.

Doctors believe that Cole's illness is likely the result of drug usage decades ago, which she documented in her 2000 autobiography, *Angel on My Shoulder*.

"I've been so fortunate to have learned so much from my past experiences," said Cole. "I am embraced by the love and support of my family and friends; I am committed to my belief in myself and in my abiding faith to meet this challenge with a heartfelt optimism and determination. This is how I intend to deal with this current challenge in my life."

Cole, the daughter of jazz legend Nat King Cole, has sold millions of records over her long career. She recently released "Still Unforgettable," the follow-up to 1991's Grammy-winning, multiplatinum CD "Unforgettable ... With Love," on which she remade some of her father's classics.

From: <http://www.nataliecole.com>



Tommy Lee

Will Johnny Depp Play Tommy Lee in Biopic?

From: <http://bittenandbou.nd.com/2008/07/28/will-johnny-depp-play-tommy-lee-in-biopic/>

Well, that is exactly what Motley Crue drummer Tommy Lee is hoping for. Lee called actor Johnny Depp the "best actor ever" and wants Depp to portray him in a biopic based on Motley Crue's memoir, *The Dirt*.



Johnny Depp

Details of the movie sound like we will get to see the one month marriage Tommy had with Elaine Irwin Bergen and his marriages to Heather Locklear and Pamela Anderson. He will also bring us into his experience of finding out he has **hepatitis C**.

The finer details of the film - such as producer, director and actors, are being worked out now.

Joke

When a panel of doctors was asked to vote on adding a new wing to their hospital, the **Allergists** voted to scratch it and the **Dermatologists** advised not to make any rash moves.

The **Gastroenterologists** had sort of a gut feeling about it, but the **Neurologists** thought Administration had a lot of nerve, and the **Obstetricians** felt they were all laboring under a misconception.

The **Ophthalmologists** considered the idea shortsighted; the **Pathologists** yelled, 'Over my dead body, while the **Pediatricians** said, 'Oh, Grow up!'

The **Psychiatrists** thought the whole idea was madness, the **Radiologists** could see right through it, and the **Surgeons** decided to wash their hands of the whole thing.

The **Internists** thought it was a bitter pill to swallow, and the **Plastic Surgeons** said, 'This puts a whole new face on the matter.'

The **Podiatrists** thought it was a step forward, but the **Urologists** felt the scheme wouldn't hold water.

The **Anesthesiologists** thought the whole idea was a gas and the **Cardiologists** didn't have the heart to say no.

In the end, the **Proctologists** left the decision up to someone in Administration.

Rolling Down Highway 41

Earlier this year the Allman Brothers Band canceled a handful of shows while Gregg Allman underwent treatment for **hepatitis C**. Gregg has made a complete recovery and the band is back on the road again.

"I feel great, man," Gregg stated. "I've known about having the disease for a long time, but was never a candidate for treatment until last year. I knew it would be a battle, but I'm great now. I just didn't have the energy to play. And we're a band that puts on two-hour shows that change every single night. You gotta be at full capacity to do that. And now I am."

From: <http://www.relix.com/>



Gregg Allman

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Hepatitis Health is brought to you by the Hepatitis Prevention Program, Bureau of HIV/AIDS in the Division of Disease Control at the Florida Department of Health. We want to know what you are doing in your community to prevent viral hepatitis. Please submit your articles and photos to: April.Crowley@doh.state.fl.us



As one goes through life, one learns that if you don't paddle your own canoe, you don't move.

--Katharine Hepburn