

Hepatitis C Virus

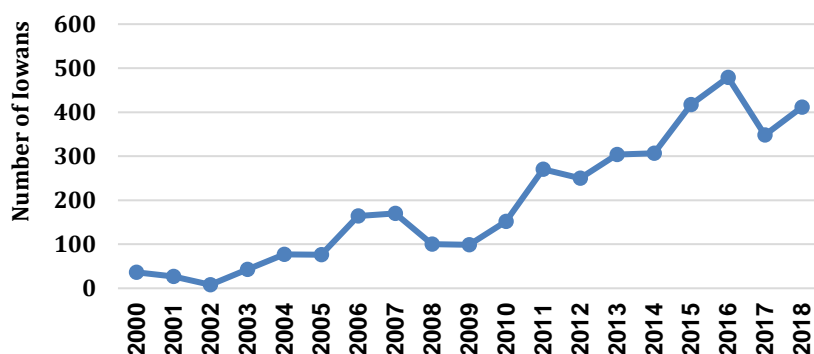
ON THE RISE AMONG YOUNG ADULTS



WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

Hepatitis C is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV). HCV is the most common blood-borne illness in the United States. Untreated, hepatitis C can cause serious health problems including liver damage, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.

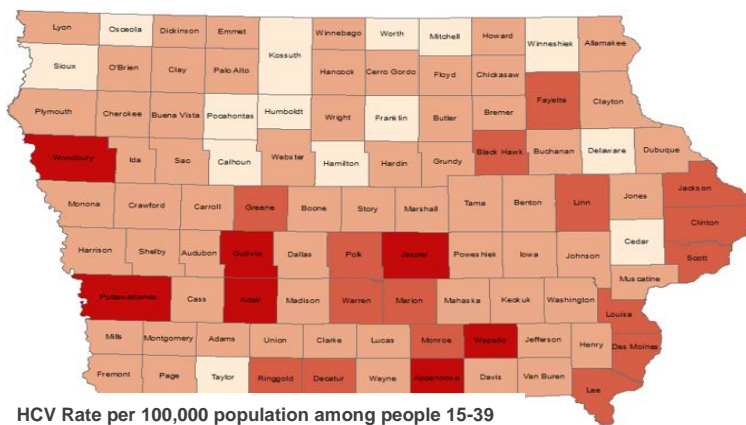
CHRONIC HCV IN IOWANS UNDER 40



WHY ARE YOUNG ADULTS GETTING HEPATITIS C?

Injection drug use is the primary driver for increases in new cases among adults. The recent increase in abuse of prescription and non-prescription opioids is fueling an increase in hepatitis C among people under age 40.

HCV Rates in Iowans under age 40, per 100,000 population



INJECTION DRUG USE

The hepatitis C virus can be transmitted easily through surfaces, equipment, or objects that contain the blood of someone living with hepatitis C.

In 2018, nearly 80% of Iowans under age 40 diagnosed with HCV reported injecting drugs.

There are several things people who inject drugs can do to prevent acquiring or transmitting hepatitis C, including:

- Use sterile injection equipment every time you inject.
- Avoid reusing or sharing drug injection equipment, including syringes, cookers, cottons, water and ties.
- Use a spare sterile syringe to split drugs.
- Get tested for hepatitis C regularly.
- Seek treatment for substance use disorder.

Youth and young adults who report ever having injected drugs should be tested for Hepatitis C.

For more information on hepatitis C virus and to view hepatitis C surveillance reports, please visit:
<http://idph.iowa.gov/hivstdhep>

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