County of Riverside
Department of Public Health

Disease Control
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Hepatitis C
Public Health Advisory
May 1, 2013

May is Hepatitis C Awareness Month. As many as 4.4 million American adults are living with hepatitis C and are not aware of their diagnosis. Viral hepatitis is the leading cause of liver cancer and the leading reason for liver transplants in the United States.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are urging those individuals born from 1945 to 1965, the "Baby Boomers," to be tested for hepatitis C. This population makes up 75-percent of all adult cases of hepatitis C. The CDC states that for every 100 people infected with viral hepatitis C, 75 to 85 will develop chronic hepatitis C infections, 60 to 70 will develop chronic liver disease, 5 to 20 will develop liver cirrhosis, and, one to five will die from liver cancer or cirrhosis of the liver

May 19th, is National Hepatitis Testing Day! County of Riverside Department of Public Health is encouraging physicians to test their Baby Boomer patients for Hepatitis C, which was the second most reported disease in Riverside County in 2011. This condition primarily affects adults over the age of 45 with a reported 328.8 cases per 100,000 populations.

When using the HCV Antibody test for screening, please insure that confirmatory testing is ordered. According to the CDC, an individual is considered to have serologic evidence of hepatitis C infection only after the anti-HCV screening test has been verified by a positive signal to cut off ratio (S/CO). If the S/CO ratio is not met, more specific serologic tests such as RIBA, nucleic acid test (NAT), genotypes, or HCV-RNA should be ordered.

Hepatitis C must be reported within 7 days of a positive result. Please report cases to the Disease Control Branch either by fax or mail to:

Disease Control:
P.O. Box 7600
Riverside, CA 92513-7600
Confidential Fax:
(951) 358-5102

For questions regarding testing please contact the Communicable Disease Program at:
(951) 358-5107