

HEPATITIS B PREVENTABLE BY VACCINE, CONTROLLABLE WITH TREATMENT

WHAT IS IT?



Hepatitis B is a virus that attacks the liver. It can cause short-term illness, but in some people it becomes chronic and can lead to **cirrhosis, liver failure, and liver cancer**. WHO describes hepatitis B as a viral infection that can cause both acute and chronic liver disease.

HOW IT SPREADS



Blood-to-blood contact



Sex without protection



Sharing needles or injecting equipment



Mother-to-baby transmission during birth



Unsafe medical or tattoo/piercing practices

TESTING

You may feel well and still have hepatitis B — testing is the only way to know.

- ✓ Blood test confirms infection.
- ✓ Test people at risk, pregnant women, household/sexual contacts, and people from higher-prevalence countries.

CALL TO ACTION

Vaccinate. Test. Treat. Prevent liver cancer.



Integrate hepatitis into national cancer strategies



Reduce stigma and discrimination in healthcare and society



Support patient organisations and community-led testing and care models



Scale up testing and access to treatment

Europe will not achieve hepatitis elimination targets without improving equitable access to hepatitis B vaccination, testing, and treatment across all countries.

*Eliminate hepatitis. Prevent liver cancer. Integrate care. Engage communities. Close the implementation gap. **ACT NOW.***

WHY IT MATTERS IN EUROPE *In the EU/EEA:*



3.2-3.6

million people are living with chronic hepatitis B



15,000

deaths annually



+65%

of cases remain undiagnosed

Viral hepatitis is one of the major preventable drivers of liver cancer in Europe, alongside alcohol and fatty liver MASLD/MASH.

VACCINATION

Hepatitis B has a safe and effective vaccine.



Vaccination prevents hepatitis B infection (and also hepatitis D infection).



Universal newborn immunisation against hepatitis B and prevention of mother-to-child transmission.



Vaccination to adults at risk and adult catch-up vaccination programmes across Europe.



TREATMENT

Hepatitis B is usually not cured — but it can be controlled.



Treatment reduces progression to cirrhosis and liver cancer



Access to treatment varies widely across Europe due to policy and pricing differences



📍 Bastion Tower,
Place du Champ
de Mars 5
1050 Brussels,
Belgium

✉ office@elpa.eu

☎ 0032 478 155 224

WHO guidance supports prevention, testing, treatment and monitoring to help eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030.

HEPATITIS C NO VACCINE — BUT IT CAN BE CURED

WHAT IS IT?



Hepatitis C is a blood-borne virus that infects the liver. It can be acute or chronic and may silently damage the liver for years

HOW IT SPREADS



Blood-to-blood contact



Sharing needles or injecting equipment



Unsterile tattoos or piercings



Blood transfusions or medical procedures before modern screening



Less commonly, sex involving blood exposure

TESTING



Many people have no symptoms for years — get tested if you may have been exposed.

New infections are usually asymptomatic and chronic infection is often undiagnosed until serious liver damage develops.

WHY IT MATTERS IN EUROPE *In the EU/EEA:*



1.8 million

people are living with chronic hepatitis C



35,000

deaths annually



+65%

of cases remain undiagnosed

Viral hepatitis is one of the major preventable drivers of liver cancer in Europe, alongside alcohol and fatty liver MASLD/MASH. Hepatitis C-related liver cancer mortality has increased despite treatment advances.

VACCINATION

There is currently no vaccine for hepatitis C.



Prevention depends on safer injecting, sterile equipment, blood safety, harm reduction, testing, and treatment.

TREATMENT

Hepatitis C can usually be cured with tablets.

Modern direct-acting antivirals are short-course oral treatments with high cure rates, with few side effects and **>95% long-term cure rates.**



Treatment is one of the biggest opportunities in liver cancer prevention



Inequalities in access still limit impact across Europe

CALL TO ACTION

Test. Treat early. Cure hepatitis C. Prevent liver cancer



Integrate hepatitis into national cancer strategies



Reduce stigma and discrimination in healthcare and society



Support patient organisations and community-led testing and care models



Scale up testing, harm reduction, and access to curative treatment

Europe will NOT meet hepatitis elimination targets without making hepatitis C testing and treatment accessible across Europe



📍 Bastion Tower,
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de Mars 5
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☎ 0032 478 155 224

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