

“To Do” List for Co-Infected Individuals

Make sure you:

- See a knowledgeable healthcare provider.
 - Get a liver diagnosis.
 - Seek treatment.
 - Get vaccinated against Hepatitis A and B.
 - Get more information about HIV and HCV.
 - Explore ways to reduce harm to your body.
 - Explore ways to reduce infection to others.
 - Seek social support for your infection.
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Free Testing Centers in San Francisco

San Francisco Free Clinic

4900 California St.
(415) 750-9894
www.sffc.org

Glide Health Clinic

330 Ellis St., Room 418
(415) 674-6140
www.glide.org

Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic

558 Clayton St.
(415) 487-5631
www.hafmc.org

The Women’s Clinic

2166 Hayes St., Room 104
(415) 379-7800
www.womenscommunityclinic.org

The Native American Health Center

160 Capp St.
(415) 621-8051
www.nativehealth.org

Support Groups in San Francisco

Shanti: HIV/HCV Co-Infection Drop-In Group
1800 Market St., Room 302 (SF LGBT Center)
Every Thursday from 4:15 – 6:00

HCV Support Group
455 Valencia St. (Quan Yin Healing Arts Center)
1st & 3rd Thursdays from 6:30 – 7:45

Open Group
2100 Webster St., Room 106 (Cal Pacific Med. Center)
1st & 3rd Tuesdays at 6:45

Additional Resources

The Hepatitis C Support Project

www.hepcadvocate.org

Hepatitis C Harm Reduction Project

www.hepcproject.org

Hepatitis C Advocate

www.hcvadvocate.org

Hepatitis Foundation International

www.hepfi.org

American Liver Foundation

www.liverfoundation.org

HIV STD Education Office
City College of San Francisco
50 Phelan Avenue, Cloud Hall 404
San Francisco, CA 94112

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Fax: 415-452-5203

The HIV/STD Education Office offers a wide range of educational opportunities, services, and resources to the entire CCSF community including, students, faculty, and staff.

Our philosophy emphasizes a harm reduction and sex positive approach to HIV/STD prevention and services in order to assist people in making healthy decisions that result in gaining more direct control of their lives.



HIV & HCV Co-Infection:

A Quick Reference and Resource Guide

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HIV & HCV Co-Infection

HIV and HCV co-infection occurs when an individual is infected with both viruses simultaneously. Because HIV and HCV are blood-borne viruses that affect many of the same populations, co-infection is relatively common. 1 out of 3 people with HIV have HCV.

If you are co-infected with HIV and HCV, know that you are not alone. It is estimated that a quarter of a million people in the U.S. are co-infected with both HIV and HCV. If you have HIV or HCV, but have not been tested for both viruses, get tested for both immediately. Treatments are available. Therefore, it is important to get tested and begin treatment as soon as possible.

Get tested. Know your status. Get treatment.

HIV Infection

HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. It is mainly spread through blood and sexual contact. The virus attacks the immune system, leaving you vulnerable to opportunistic infections.

Although there is no cure for HIV, treatments are available. HIV is infectious. It is important to learn more about HIV if you are diagnosed.

HCV Infection

HCV is a disease that affects the liver. In trying to fight the virus, the immune system response causes damage to the liver. It is mainly spread through blood contact.

Although there is no cure for HCV, treatments are available and 25-50% of people on treatment clear the virus. HCV is infectious. It is important to learn more about HIV if you are diagnosed.

HIV & HCV Work Together, Against You

HIV & HCV co-infection is a serious health matter because:

- If you are HIV-positive, your HCV infection gets worse faster than if you had HCV alone.
- If you are HIV-positive, the HCV virus multiplies faster than if you were HIV-negative.
- Having HCV makes it harder for the body to absorb HIV medications.
- Co-infection increases the risk for and progression of liver disease.
- Side effects from medications are worse in individuals who are co-infected.

HCV does NOT appear to make HIV multiply faster.

Risk Behaviors

Some behaviors are riskier than others and may transmit both HIV and HCV. Shooting drugs, sharing needles, and exposure to blood are high risk behaviors that may transmit both infections simultaneously.

Unprotected sex, and contact with sexual fluids, is riskier for HIV than HCV. Un-sterilized piercing and acupuncture equipment is riskier for HCV than HIV.

It is much easier to get HCV through blood than HIV.

Harm Reduction

If you engage in high-risk behavior and if you are currently co-infected with HIV and HCV it is important to reduce harm to your body.

Here are some easy ways to reduce harm:

- **AVOID DRINKING ALCOHOL.** Alcohol weakens the immune system and damages the liver even when you are healthy. Drinking alcohol if you are co-infected makes it worse.
 - **RESPECT YOUR BODY.** Eat healthy food, drink plenty of water, get plenty of sleep, and try to exercise. Taking good care of your body makes an important difference.
 - **DO NOT SHARE NEEDLES.** Part of reducing harm involves reducing harm to others. To help fight the spread of the HIV and HCV, do not share needles or works.
 - **GET VACCINATED.** Vaccinations against Hepatitis A and B are available. Get vaccinated to reduce complications from other viruses.
 - **KNOW YOUR MEDICATIONS.** It is important to avoid medications and herbal supplements that may cause additional liver damage. If you are unsure, ask your doctor.
 - **GET SUPPORT.** Find additional information about HIV and HCV co-infection. Seek social support groups for co-infected people.
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Treatment

Treatments are available that fight HIV and HCV and significantly prolong healthy life. You can only seek treatment if you know you are infected. It is important to get tested and talk to your doctor immediately if you are co-infected. Treatment for co-infection is difficult – seek healthcare providers and referrals who are knowledgeable in HIV and HCV.