

# Why is **Hepatitis C** everybody's responsibility?

*"We are responsible for each other and ourselves."*

– Kodiak Alutiiq Cultural Value

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention American Indian and Alaska Native people have the highest mortality rate from hepatitis C (HCV) of any race or ethnicity. Hepatitis C is treatable in our communities, by our own providers.



## The Hep C Mask

This mask, from the exhibit "Aggravated Organisms," was carved by Drew Michael (Yupik/Inupiaq) and painted by Elizabeth Ellis (Alutiiq/Sugpiaq) to represent hepatitis C.

This mask traveled through Alaska and the Seattle area to spread awareness before being burned in a traditional ceremony.

The Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board aims to raise awareness of the hepatitis C mask, the story of its modern creation, and its message of the importance of hepatitis C testing and treatment.

## Learn more

Join the Health Board's teleECHO clinic focusing on the management & treatment of patients with hepatitis C. The 1-hour-long clinic includes an opportunity to present cases, receive recommendations from a specialist, engage in a didactic session, and become part of a learning community.

### For more information:

- Text **HCV** to **97779**, or
- Visit [www.npaihb.org/hcv](http://www.npaihb.org/hcv)



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## Hepatitis C:

Everybody's Responsibility

**Hepatitis C can be cured and our IHS, tribal, and urban Indian primary care clinics have the capacity to provide this cure**



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# Hepatitis C facts

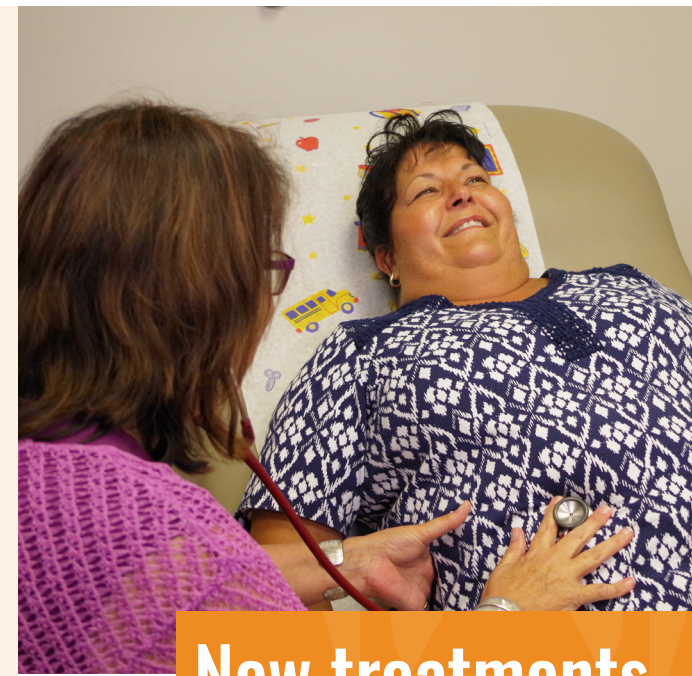
1. It is estimated that as many as 120,000 AI/ANs are currently infected with the hepatitis C virus, of which the vast majority have not been treated.
2. Baby boomers, people born from 1945 through 1965, are five times more likely to have hepatitis C.
3. New outbreaks of hepatitis C in the United States among young adults, in predominantly suburban and rural areas, have emerged and may be fueling an increase in hepatitis C.
4. Early detection of the hepatitis C virus through routine and targeted screening is critical to the success of treating the virus with new drug regimens.
5. By treating at the primary care level, we can begin to eradicate this disease.
6. Curing a patient of hepatitis C greatly reduces their risk of developing liver cancer and liver failure.

## Be ready to talk to your patients about hepatitis C

Many IHS, tribal, and urban Indian (I/T/U) clinics have already initiated hepatitis C screening and treatment resulting in patients cured and earning greatly deserved gratitude from the communities they serve.

### Patient talking points

- Hepatitis C is a disease that is spread through contact with the blood or body fluids of a person infected with the hepatitis C virus.
- Most people with hepatitis C do not know they are infected.
- The CDC recommends that all baby boomers, people born from 1945 through 1965, are screened for hepatitis C at least once.
- The development of new oral medications, with generally mild side effects, may provide a cure for hepatitis C infection.
- Our I/T/U primary care clinics have the capacity to provide this cure.



## New treatments

Hepatitis C has historically been difficult to treat, with highly toxic drug regimens and low efficacy (cure) rates. In recent years, however, medical options have vastly improved: current treatments have almost no side effects, are oral-only, and have cure rates of over 90%.

Curing a patient of chronic hepatitis C greatly reduces the risk of liver cancer and liver failure. These new drug regimens have made early detection and treatment of hepatitis C critical.

*We're proving that hepatitis C is treatable in our communities, by our own providers.*

To learn about current FDA approved drug regimens visit [hepatitisc.uw.edu](http://hepatitisc.uw.edu)