

## Hepatitis Awareness Month and Testing Day, May 2018

The United States commemorates National Hepatitis Awareness Month each May, and May 19 is designated as Hepatitis Testing Day. Viral hepatitis still persists as a major public health threat despite availability of preventive measures such as vaccines and therapies, including a curative treatment for hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection.

New cases of hepatitis B virus (HBV) and HCV infections are on the rise, largely among persons who inject drugs, with some attributed to the current U.S. opioid epidemic (1). Recent hepatitis A outbreaks have also occurred among unvaccinated injection drug users and homeless persons (2). Since August 2016, CDC has responded to hepatitis A outbreaks with high HBV/HCV co-infection, hospitalization, and mortality rates in multiple states (<https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/outbreaks/2017March-HepatitisA.htm>). New cases of perinatal HBV infection also continue (1); recently, CDC updated recommendations to strengthen vaccination among newborns and manage pregnant women (3).

This issue of *MMWR* includes an article about the promising outcomes of three HBV programs that implemented community-based services to improve HBV testing, linkage to care, and treatment among persons born in intermediate-high prevalence countries (4).

### References

1. CDC. Viral hepatitis surveillance—United States, 2016. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services; 2016. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/statistics/2016surveillance/pdfs/2016HepSurveillanceRpt.pdf>
2. Williams WW, Lu PJ, O'Halloran A, et al. Surveillance of vaccination coverage among adult populations—United States, 2015. *MMWR Surveill Summ* 2017;66(No. SS-11). <https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss6611a1>
3. Schillie S, Vellozzi C, Reingold A, et al. Prevention of hepatitis B virus infection in the United States: recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. *MMWR Recomm Rep* 2018;67(No. RR-1). <https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.rr6701a1>
4. Harris AM, Link-Gelles R, Kim K, et al. Community-based services to improve testing and linkage to care among non-U.S.-born persons with chronic hepatitis B virus infection—three U.S. programs, October 2014–September 2017. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2018;67:541–6.

## Community-Based Services to Improve Testing and Linkage to Care Among Non-U.S.-Born Persons with Chronic Hepatitis B Virus Infection — Three U.S. Programs, October 2014–September 2017

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Among an estimated 850,000 to 2.2 million persons with chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection in the United States, 70% are non-U.S.-born (1,2). All patients require linkage to care, and approximately 20%–40% require antiviral treatment (3).

### INSIDE

- 547 Outbreaks Associated with Treated Recreational Water — United States, 2000–2014
- 552 Trends in Antiretroviral Therapy Eligibility and Coverage Among Children Aged <15 Years with HIV Infection — 20 PEPFAR-Supported Sub-Saharan African Countries, 2012–2016
- 556 Cholera Epidemic — Lusaka, Zambia, October 2017–May 2018
- 560 Notes from the Field: Outbreak of *Vibrio cholerae* Associated with Attending a Funeral — Chegutu District, Zimbabwe, 2018
- 562 Notes from the Field: Investigation of an Outbreak of *Salmonella* Paratyphi B Variant L(+) tartrate + (Java) Associated with Ball Python Exposure — United States, 2017
- 565 QuickStats

Continuing Education examination available at [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/cme/conted\\_info.html#weekly](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/cme/conted_info.html#weekly).

