

Steps to Safer Injection

People who inject drugs can take steps to reduce the chances that they will either contract Hep C or pass it on to others if they are already infected. The injection steps below can be divided into five distinct stages: Planning ahead, Preparation, Mixing, Injecting and Cleaning up. The equipment distributed in safer-injection kits can be obtained from local needle exchange programs.

Risk of Transmission:
Fluid + Route + Activity = Risk of Transmission

HCV: Hepatitis C Virus

Hepatitis C (HCV) is a blood-borne pathogen that harms the liver. The liver breaks down toxins, aids in digestion, filters blood, metabolises drugs, and more, making it an important organ in the human body.

HCV has a cure, but no vaccine, and can only be transmitted through blood.

Many people can live 20-30 years without any negative effects from the virus, and still transmit it to other people, making it important to get tested regularly.

Safer Injection

One of the best ways for people who inject drugs to avoid infection by blood-borne diseases like hepatitis C is to use new sterile equipment (that has not been used before) every time. This means not reusing any materials, including

materials used for injection

- -needles
- -syringe
- tourniquet

materials used for drug preparation

- -cookers and spoons
- -filters
- -water
- -swabs

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a blood-borne pathogen that weakens the immune system.

HIV can only be transmitted through the following fluids: blood, breastmilk, vaginal fluid, rectal fluid, semen (including pre-cum).

There is no cure and no vaccine. Once someone has HIV it is for life. However, HIV treatment that is adhered to can suppress the virus to an undetectable level.

All information obtained from and for further information go to: www.catie.ca