Have You Been Tested?

May 12, 2014 By Jennifer Morton

Hepatitis C is a leading cause of death among people living with HIV. It's estimated that between 25 percent and 33 percent of all HIV-positive people in the United States are coinfected with hep C. Luckily newer drugs on the market have increased hepatitis C cure rates. Although all of the new drugs are not officially approved yet for those coinfected with HIV, these potentially game-changing meds are being studied in clinical trials and approval is expected in the near future. What's more, other promising hep C drugs are in the research pipeline.

Just like HIV, it's important to get tested for the hepatitis C virus (HCV) and get connected to care. POZ asked you if you've been tested and/or treated for hep C. Here are your responses.

Have you ever been tested for hepatitis C?
85% Yes
8% No
7% Not sure

Top 3 reasons for not starting hep C treatment:
1. Waiting for new medications to become available
2. I don't need treatment yet
3. Worried about side effects

Where do you get your hepatitis C information?
34% Health care provider
25% Friends and family
13% The Internet
10% Magazines or books
7% Hepatitis newsletters
6% Hepatitis support groups
5% A national or local organization

Who is responsible for managing your hepatitis C?
17% Primary care physician
55% Infectious disease specialist
11% Gastroenterologist

15% Hepatologist
2% Other

How long ago were you diagnosed with hepatitis C?
45% More than 10 years ago
21% 6 to 10 years ago
28% 1 to 5 years ago
6% Less than a year ago

If you have hep C, have you ever been on treatment?
47% Yes
53% No

Why did you get tested for hepatitis C?
72% Health care provider suggested it
23% I asked to be tested
5% I was notified by a public health official that I might be infected

Source April/May 2011 POZ Survey

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