



HEALTH ADVISORY #119

Hotline Leads to Additional Cases of Hepatitis C Detected: Expanded Patient Notification

TO: West Virginia Healthcare Providers, Hospitals and other Healthcare Facilities

**FROM: Rahul Gupta, MD, MPH, FACP, Commissioner and State Health Officer
Bureau for Public Health, WV Department of Health & Human Resources**

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LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY HEALTH PROVIDERS, HOSPITAL-BASED PHYSICIANS, AND OTHER APPLICABLE PARTNERS

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Bureau for Public Health (BPH) today is expanding patient notification for persons who may have received a stress test at the Raleigh Heart Clinic with injectable medications prior to March 1, 2012, following the detection of additional cases of hepatitis C.

On March 11, 2016, the Bureau for Public Health issued 2,311 notifications, to patients of Raleigh Heart Clinic who underwent stress testing with injectable medications administered during their stress tests at the clinic between March 1, 2012 and March 27, 2015. The notification was to inform patients of a possible exposure to blood-borne pathogens.

“Four additional cases of hepatitis C, contracted prior to March 1, 2012, have since been detected by the Bureau for Public Health following the outbreak investigation into the Raleigh Heart Clinic,” said Dr. Rahul Gupta, Commissioner and State Health Officer. “The four cases were discovered as a result of the success of the hotline, but cannot be conclusively linked to the clinic. At this time, we are expanding the patient notification to recommend, that as a precaution, all persons who may have received a stress test at the Raleigh Heart Clinic with injectable medications prior to March 1, 2012, should consider getting tested for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).”

BPH and the Beckley-Raleigh County Health Department, with the assistance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), originally conducted an investigation of several cases of viral hepatitis that appeared to be associated with stress tests performed at the Raleigh Heart Clinic in Beckley, West Virginia. Two groups of hepatitis C infections (affecting 8 patients receiving cardiac stress tests on 3 different days) and two groups of hepatitis B infections (affecting 4 patients receiving cardiac stress tests on 2 different days) were identified among patients who had injectable medications administered during their stress tests at the clinic.

An accompanying frequently asked question (FAQ) document encouraged patients who had a concern about potential infections to call the hotline. On April 18, 2016, the FAQ was expanded to encourage patients who received a stress test at the Raleigh Heart Clinic prior to March 1, 2012, to talk to their doctor about whether they should be tested.

Persons wanting to be tested may receive testing by their healthcare provider or local health department. BPH’s hotline is available at 1-800-642-8244 to answer questions about the notification they received, this expanded notification, or where to be tested. Additional information may found online at www.dide.wv.gov.

This message was directly distributed by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health to local health departments and professional associations. Receiving entities are responsible for further disseminating the information as appropriate to the target audience.

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