



## Remember:

- You cannot pass the hepatitis C virus through breastfeeding unless you have cracked or bleeding nipples.
- Hepatitis C can be cured for the pregnant person after giving birth and the child after age 3.
- Method of delivery (such as cesarean section) does not impact hepatitis C spread to your baby.



West Virginia Department of  
Health and Human Resources

Bureau for Public Health



## Pregnancy and Hepatitis C

*What you need to know for you  
and your baby to stay healthy.*

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## Hepatitis C in Pregnancy

Hepatitis C is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus. Most people who acquire the hepatitis C virus will develop a chronic, or lifelong, infection.

However, there is a cure. More than 90% of people who receive treatment are cured with little to no side effects within 12 weeks.

Pregnant persons can pass the hepatitis C virus to their babies during pregnancy. Although transmission cannot be prevented, children can be treated and cured at age 3.



## Things to Know about Hepatitis C

Talk to your doctor to ensure you are tested for hepatitis C at least once during pregnancy. If you are engaged in risk factors, you should be tested for hepatitis C regularly.

Infants who are born to someone with hepatitis C have a 5 to 15% chance of becoming positive for the disease. If you do have hepatitis C, make sure your baby's doctor knows so your baby's liver health can be monitored until it is time for treatment at age 3.

Breastfeeding, cuddling, kissing, and playing with your baby are all safe activities without risk of passing the virus to your baby.

## Hepatitis C Risk Factors

- Sharing drug-injection equipment
- Born to a person with the hepatitis C virus
- Work around blood or needles
- Sex with an infected person
- Unregulated tattoos or body piercings
- Sharing personal items, such as razors and nail clippers
- Blood transfusions and organ transplants prior to June 1992

