

Hepatitis C is a viral infection that affects the liver. This can happen through sharing needles or syringes, or from unsafe medical procedures such as blood transfusions with unscreened blood products. Symptoms can include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine and yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice). The remaining 70% (55–85%) of persons will develop chronic HCV infection. There is no vaccine for hepatitis C, but it can be treated with antiviral medications. Acute HCV infections are usually asymptomatic and most do not lead to a life-threatening disease. Of those with chronic HCV infection, the risk of cirrhosis ranges from 15% to 30% within 20 years. Hepatitis C is spread through contact with infected blood.