



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD
Commissioner

New Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Recommendations for Hepatitis C Testing Among Perinatally Exposed Infants and Children

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends testing for hepatitis C (HCV) with a nucleic acid test for HCV RNA as early as 2 months in infants and children born to pregnant persons with current or probable HCV infection. This is an update from previous guidance recommending hepatitis C antibody testing at or after 18 months of age.
- The CDC recommends universal HCV screening for pregnant persons during each pregnancy. In 2020, CDC expanded previous risk-based testing recommendations to include universal screening for all adults aged ≥ 18 years at least once and for all pregnant persons during each pregnancy.
- Effective May 3, 2024, New York State health care providers are required to provide hepatitis C testing to all pregnant people during each pregnancy.

June 14, 2024

Dear Colleague:

In November 2023, the CDC [released](#) new recommendations for HCV testing among perinatally exposed infants and children. Below is a summary of these recommendations.

In 2022, 19 children ages 2 to 36 months were newly reported with known perinatal HCV exposure in New York City, of whom 6 had confirmed perinatal HCV, according to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC Health Department)'s [Hepatitis A, B and C in New York City: 2022 Annual Report](#). Testing perinatally exposed infants and children for HCV and connecting them to care and treatment, as needed is an important step in the NYC Health Department's [Plan to Eliminate Viral hepatitis as a Major Public Health Threat in New York City by 2030](#).

CDC Recommendations for HCV Testing Among Perinatally Exposed Infants and Children

- Test all infants and children born to pregnant persons with current or probable HCV infection.
 - Any pregnant person with detectable HCV RNA is considered to have a current HCV infection. If HCV antibody (anti-HCV) testing is reactive and HCV RNA results are not available, this is considered a probable HCV infection.
- Test all perinatally exposed infants ages 2 to 6 months for detection of HCV RNA with a nucleic acid test (NAT).
 - Consult with a health care provider with expertise in pediatric HCV management for all infants and children with detectable HCV RNA.

- No additional follow-up is required for infants with an undetectable HCV RNA result unless clinically warranted.
- Test all infants and children ages 7 to 17 months who were perinatally exposed to HCV (and have not previously been tested) with a NAT for HCV RNA.
- Test all children ages 18 months or older who were perinatally exposed to HCV (and have not previously been tested) with an anti-HCV test with reflex to NAT for HCV RNA.

For children born to pregnant persons with unknown HCV status, testing can be performed at age 2 months with a NAT for HCV RNA or at 18 months or older with an anti-HCV test with reflex to NAT for HCV RNA.

CDC Recommendations for Universal HCV Screening in Pregnancy

In addition to the above recommendations, the CDC [recommends](#) universal HCV screening for pregnant persons during each pregnancy. Effective May 3, 2024, New York State health care providers are required to provide hepatitis C testing to all pregnant people during each pregnancy.

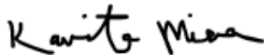
If you have any questions contact the NYC Health Department at hep@health.nyc.gov.

Sincerely,



Celia Quinn, MD, MPH

Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Disease Control



Kavita Misra, PhD, MPH

Director of Surveillance, Viral Hepatitis Program

Bureau of Hepatitis, HIV, and Sexually Transmitted Infections