



Central Michigan District Health Department

Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities



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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local Media Outlets

From: Shelby Pasch, Health Promotion Supervisor, CMDHD

RE: World Hepatitis Day

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World Hepatitis Day

July 28 is World Hepatitis Day.

Vaccination for Hepatitis A and B along with routine screening for Hepatitis C will decrease chances of infection.

Central Michigan District Health Department offers vaccines for hepatitis A and B along with free screening and testing for hepatitis C. World Hepatitis Day (WHD) takes place every year on July 28 and brings the world together under a single theme to raise awareness of the global burden of viral hepatitis and to influence real change. If left untreated, it may progress from acute to chronic, and may even cause lifelong infection leading to serious liver damage or liver cancer with symptoms only showing when complications develop. There are at least 5 different types of hepatitis (A-E); the three most common in the United States are hepatitis A, hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

Viral hepatitis is one of the leading causes of death globally, accounting for 1.34 million deaths per year – that is as many as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, or malaria. Together, hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C cause 80% of liver cancer cases in the world. Viral hepatitis is not found in one location nor among one set of people; it is a truly global epidemic that can affect millions of people without them even being aware. Currently, 90% of people living with hepatitis B and 80% living with hepatitis C are not aware of their status. This can result in the real possibility of developing fatal liver disease at some point in their lives and in some cases, unknowingly transmitting the infection to others.

With the availability of effective vaccines and treatments for hepatitis B and a cure for hepatitis C, the elimination of viral hepatitis is achievable, but greater awareness and understanding of the disease and the risks is a must, as is access to cheaper diagnostics and treatment. With the inclusion of viral hepatitis in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the recent adoption of the world's first global hepatitis strategy, we

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are at a pivotal moment. Now, more than ever, political commitment is needed. Without urgent action, deaths will continue to rise, and the epidemic will continue to grow. World Hepatitis Day presents an ideal opportunity; an opportunity to join and raise the profile of viral hepatitis among the public, the world's media and on the global health agenda. (Source: World Hepatitis Alliance).

For more information on hepatitis, assistance with scheduling a vaccine appointment, or testing for hepatitis C, contact any of the Central Michigan District Health Department locations or visit our website at www.cmdhd.org.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CMiDHD.

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