

HEPATITIS C VIRUS PRE- AND POST-TEST CHECKLISTS

Confidential hepatitis C Virus (HCV) pre- and post-test discussions can significantly affect how the client responds to testing and test results. When **using simple language** and individualized to a client's needs, these discussions: provide important preventive and health promotion information, enable better disease management, and encourage continued engagement with health and social care.

HCV Antibody Pre-test Discussion Checklist

- Discuss the reasons for the HCV test (client or provider initiated), such as modes of transmission
- Provide information about the testing process, including:
 - an explanation of the HCV antibody test, including window period and the need for HCV RNA test (HCV-PCR) if the antibody test is positive
 - the time it takes for results to become available
- Explain that Public Health receives positive test results and may contact client
- Discuss impact of possible positive result for client and others, including transmission prevention, and confidentiality and disclosure issues
- Waiting for test results can be challenging. Discuss supports the client might need to access during the waiting period
- Discuss a follow-up plan to obtain results and vaccines available for those at-risk/infected
- Check the client's understanding of the information provided
- Confirm if the client is now ready to proceed with testing

HCV Antibody Post-test Discussion Checklists

HCV Antibody Test

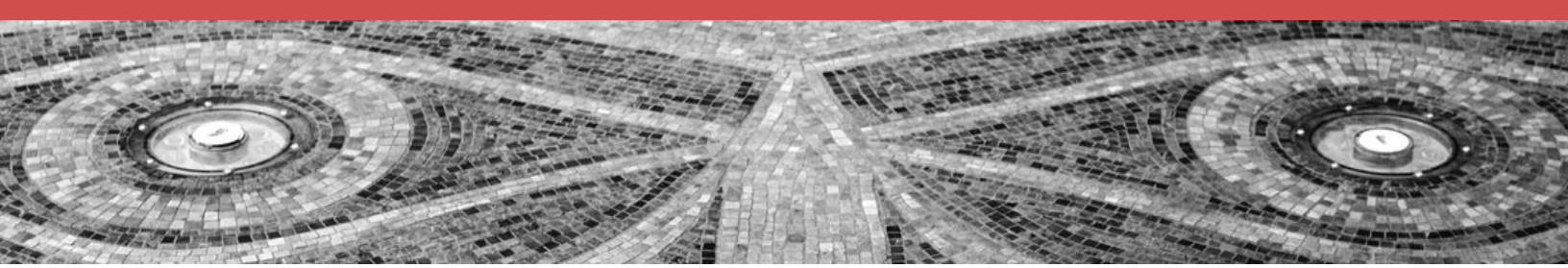
Negative

- Explain the meaning of a negative test result and confirm client understanding
- Discuss indications for further testing, considering window periods, ongoing risk behaviours, or being immune compromised. Make a follow-up plan, if applicable
- For those at-risk, explore resources needed such as education, harm reduction, vaccines, social and other resources, as appropriate
- Make referrals and encourage engagement with health care and other support services, as needed

Positive

Receiving a diagnosis of HCV is complex and can be life changing. It is important to convey the test results and relevant information in a positive and culturally safe way that encourages engagement and facilitates follow-up planning with the client.

- Explain the meaning of a positive test result (i.e., the client has been exposed to hepatitis C)
- Provide time for the client to process the result and confirm client's understanding
- Explain the need for an HCV RNA test to determine if the viral infection is still active
- Discuss potential for stigma and that **disclosure is voluntary**
- Discuss modes of transmission, harm reduction, vaccines, social and other resources, as appropriate
- Make a follow-up plan, make referrals, and encourage engagement with other health care and support services, as needed



HCV RNA Post-test Discussion Checklists

HCV RNA Test

Negative

Positive

- Explain the meaning of a negative test (i.e., the client has cleared the virus and is no longer infected)
 - Explain the need for a repeat test to rule out a false negative test result
 - Discuss risks for re-infection
 - Discuss any difficulties/issues the client may have in practicing safer behaviours, if appropriate
 - Explore resources needed such as education, harm reduction, vaccines, or others
 - Make referrals and encourage engagement with health care and other support services, as needed
 - Check the client's understanding of the information provided
- Explain the meaning of a positive test (active HCV infection)
 - Explain the need for a repeat RNA test to rule out a false positive result
 - If you suspect a newly acquired infection, discuss the need for another HCV RNA test in about six months to check if the infection is ongoing
 - Provide time for the client to process the result and confirm that they understand the result
 - Discuss modes of transmission, transmission prevention, lack of immunity against other HCV genotypes, and notifying contacts at-risk
 - Explain that HCV is a chronic disease that progresses slowly and treatments are available
 - Explain the impact of alcohol and other substances on the progression of liver disease
 - Discuss the potential for stigma and that **disclosure is voluntary**
 - Discuss healthy lifestyles (diet, exercise) and harm reduction (e.g., safer behaviours and any difficulties that the person may have in practicing safer behaviours)
 - Explore resources needed, such as HCV education or harm reduction resources
 - Determine the need for vaccines (e.g., hepatitis A and B, pneumococcal, and influenza)
 - Discuss the need for regular monitoring to check for liver disease progression and for self-management support
 - Make a follow-up plan and make referrals to other health care and support services, as appropriate
 - Ask the client about other supports, such as family, friends, community, traditional and spiritual (e.g., spiritual leaders, sweats, ceremonies)



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