

World Hepatitis Day 28 July



**Pan American
Health
Organization**



**World Health
Organization**
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Americas

World Hepatitis Day

Brief notes for collaborators requesting information

Background

In 2010 the 63rd World Health Assembly (WHA) called for a comprehensive response to viral hepatitis. As mandated by the WHA, from 2011 onwards, World Hepatitis Day is commemorated on 28th July. The World Hepatitis Day is an opportunity to raise awareness of the different forms of hepatitis: what they are and how they are transmitted; who is at risk; and the various methods of prevention and treatment. Hepatitis affect 1 in 12 people worldwide, but they also affect those close to them.

Campaign theme

"It's closer than you think"

Slogan for the Region of the Americas

"Know it, confront it, get tested"

Key messages

This is hepatitis

Despite its staggering toll on health, hepatitis remains a group of diseases that are largely unknown, undiagnosed and untreated. About 1 million people die every year because of viral hepatitis infections. Types B and C are especially serious and yet they remain hidden. They lead to chronic infection in millions of people, and, together, are the most common cause of cirrhosis and cancer of the liver.

Know it

- Viral hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver caused by one of five hepatitis viruses, referred to as types A, B, C, D and E.
- Types A and E are mainly transmitted via water and B, C and D via blood or body fluids.
- The hepatitis A virus is usually transmitted through person-to-person contact or ingestion of contaminated food or water. Hepatitis E is mainly transmitted through contaminated drinking water. Transmission of both viruses is closely associated with poor sanitation and a lack of personal hygiene habits, such as the lack of regular hand-washing.
- Hepatitis B, C and D are contracted through the blood of an infected person. They can also be contracted through the semen or vaginal fluid of an infected person.
- Blood transfusion and organ transplants may be a risk for infection of hepatitis B, C and D.
- Hepatitis D infections occur exclusively in persons who are already infected with hepatitis B. Dual infection of hepatitis B and D can result in more serious disease and negative prognosis.

It is **closer**
than you think.

Know it,
confront it,
get tested.

Hepatitis

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- Of particular concern are hepatitis B and C, since a high proportion of people infected with these viruses do not exhibit symptoms at the early stage of the disease, and only become aware of their infection when they are chronically ill, sometimes decades after infection.

Confront it

- Individuals can protect themselves and their families against hepatitis A and E by using personal hygiene habits, drinking safe water from reliable sources and consuming food in good conditions.
- Individuals can protect themselves and their families against hepatitis B, C and D by practicing safe sex and avoiding sharing of needles and other sharp items.
- PAHO/WHO recommends vaccination of all infants against hepatitis B.
- PAHO/WHO recommends safe blood and safe injection practices to reduce transmission of hepatitis B and C

Get tested

- Individuals falling into categories of risk for hepatitis should contact their local health practitioner about getting tested and recommended treatment.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective of World Hepatitis Day is to improve knowledge of key actors (ministries of health, policy maker and stakeholders) of the urgency to take action to prevent, diagnose and treat viral hepatitis; as well as to raise awareness among health practitioners and general public about the negative health impact and importance of hepatitis.

The primary audiences are:

- Ministries of health, policy makers and stakeholders
- Medical and health practitioners
- The general public
- Existing advocacy groups and activists

Outreach to these groups in the Region can be achieved through:

- PAHO/WHO Regional and Country Offices
- Civil society groups
- The media
- Professional associations
- Academia
- Institutions showing interest in supporting this initiative

Outcomes

Desired outcomes are:

- Among key actors (ministries of health, policy makers and stakeholders): policy reviews, updates and/or development; actions for interventions in the fight against hepatitis
- Among medical/health practitioners and general public: increased awareness and understanding of hepatitis

Evaluation of the campaign's success will be based on indicators including:

- Number of countries who participate in the World Hepatitis Day campaign
- Activities initiated by the country offices of PAHO/WHO
- Media impact—number of press articles and features
- World Hepatitis Day website usage—visits and downloads
- Support of the initiative by senior officials
- Increase in partners and quality of collaboration
- National strategies and allocation of resources

WHO products

- Fact sheets on hepatitis A, B, C and E (various languages):
<http://www.who.int/topics/hepatitis/factsheets/en/index.html>
- Educational video (various formats, languages and lengths):
<http://goo.gl/tLM98>
http://terrance.who.int/mediacentre/broadcast_material/world_hepatitis_day/video/
http://terrance.who.int/mediacentre/broadcast_material/world_hepatitis_day/video_60sec/
- Social media:
Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/WorldHealthOrganization?v=wall>)
Twitter @WHO(<http://twitter.com/#!/who>)
- Press release
- Updated WHO web pages on hepatitis
- A framework for global action on prevention and control of hepatitis
- A set of talking points, core questions and answers to prepare partners and media interviews

PAHO products

- Printable materials:
 - Brief notes for collaborators requesting information
 - Posters & banners
 - PAHO's hepatitis fact sheets on hepatitis in Latin America and the Caribbean and hepatitis D.
 - Briefing about hepatitis vaccination in the Americas
 - Q & A
- Videos:
 - "Successful experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean"
 - "Support of the Director in the fight against Hepatitis"
- Set of technical references and documents, including presentations about the situation of viral hepatitis in Latin America and the Caribbean
- Commemoration of World Hepatitis Day on July 26 at the HQ-WDC with the participation of Jon Secada.
- Social media: Facebook and Twitter
- Press release
- Updated PAHO web page on Viral Hepatitis

PAHO products available at: www.paho.org/hepatitis

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Viral Hepatitis Communications

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