Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

NEWS RELEASE

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Free hepatitis C screenings on National Hepatitis Testing Day May 18

DENVER—Many community-based organizations and local public health departments are offering free hepatitis C screenings to the public on National Hepatitis Testing Day, Friday, May 18. The free screning allows people to find out whether they have hepatitis C. Information on testing sites in the Denver area can be found at www.hepatitiscolorado.info. Information about testing sites in the state can be found at http://www.hepc-connection.org/.

There are many misconceptions regarding hepatitis C:

- "I don't feel sick so I must not have it."

  FALSE – Hepatitis C is called a "silent disease" because most people don't show symptoms or feel ill.
- "I get an annual physical so my doctor must test for it."

  FALSE – Hepatitis tests are not part of routine blood work done by your doctor at an annual physical.
- "I got vaccinated against hepatitis C when I was a kid, right?"

  FALSE – There is no vaccination for hepatitis C, but there are vaccinations to protect you from hepatitis A and B.

Hepatitis C is the leading cause of liver transplants and the most common chronic blood borne infection in the U.S. You should consider testing for hepatitis C if:

- You received a blood transfusion before 1992
- You ever injected drugs, even if only once a long time ago
- You are the sexual partner of an hepatitis C virus (HCV) positive person
- You were born between 1945 and 1965

For more information about National Hepatitis Testing Day, go to www.cdcnpin.org/HTD.

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