

# World Hepatitis Day 2021

*World Hepatitis Day is marked globally on 28 July. In 2021 we joined the global community in the message of **Hep can't wait!**, reminding us that we need to be proactive and act on viral hepatitis.*

Hepatitis C has had a profound effect on our community. In Australia many people with bleeding disorders acquired hepatitis C from their plasma-derived clotting factor treatment products or other blood products before 1993. Several safety measures were introduced by 1993 and the risk of bloodborne viruses from plasma-derived clotting factor products in Australia is now considered to be extremely low. But many people in our community live on with the consequences of those early infections.

## WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES IN 2021?

Revolutionary new hep C treatments are now available in Australia. They are easy to take – tablets not injections - with very high cure rates and few side effects.

### Who is at risk?

**If you had a blood product or a plasma-derived clotting factor concentrate before 1993, you could be at risk for hepatitis C.**

Many Australians with bleeding disorders and hepatitis C have now had treatment and been cured – but some might not even know they have hep C. This could be the case for some women and men with mild bleeding disorders who may have had very few treatments in their lifetime and never thought of themselves as at risk for hep C. If this is you, don't wait to be tested – find out if you have hep C. Treatment is simple and hep C can be cured.

### You have been cured – has your liver recovered?

If you don't know the answer to that question, don't wait to find out. Take the time to **contact your hepatitis specialist and check your liver test results.**



It's very important to check that you don't need ongoing follow-up with a liver specialist. For example, if you have cirrhosis or extensive scarring and have successful treatment, you will still need ongoing care of your liver.

Sadly, some people with bleeding disorders and hep C have very advanced liver disease caused by long term infection. Close liaison between hepatitis or liver specialists and Haemophilia Treatment Centres is very important for care and treatment. Research is continuing into new and improved hep C treatments and management of advanced liver disease.

As a Partner in the national World Hepatitis Day Campaign, HFA works with Hepatitis Australia and State and Territory Foundations on the annual Australian awareness campaign and is committed to making a difference on hepatitis C in Australia.

## PERSONAL STORIES

We thank Gavin Finkelstein, HFA President, and Mary Jane for sharing their personal stories about living with hep C, treatment and being cured. Read their stories in this issue of *National Haemophilia*.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit:

- [www.world.hepatitisday.org.au](http://www.world.hepatitisday.org.au)
- The HFA World Hepatitis Day page – [www.haemophilia.org.au/world-hep-day](http://www.haemophilia.org.au/world-hep-day)