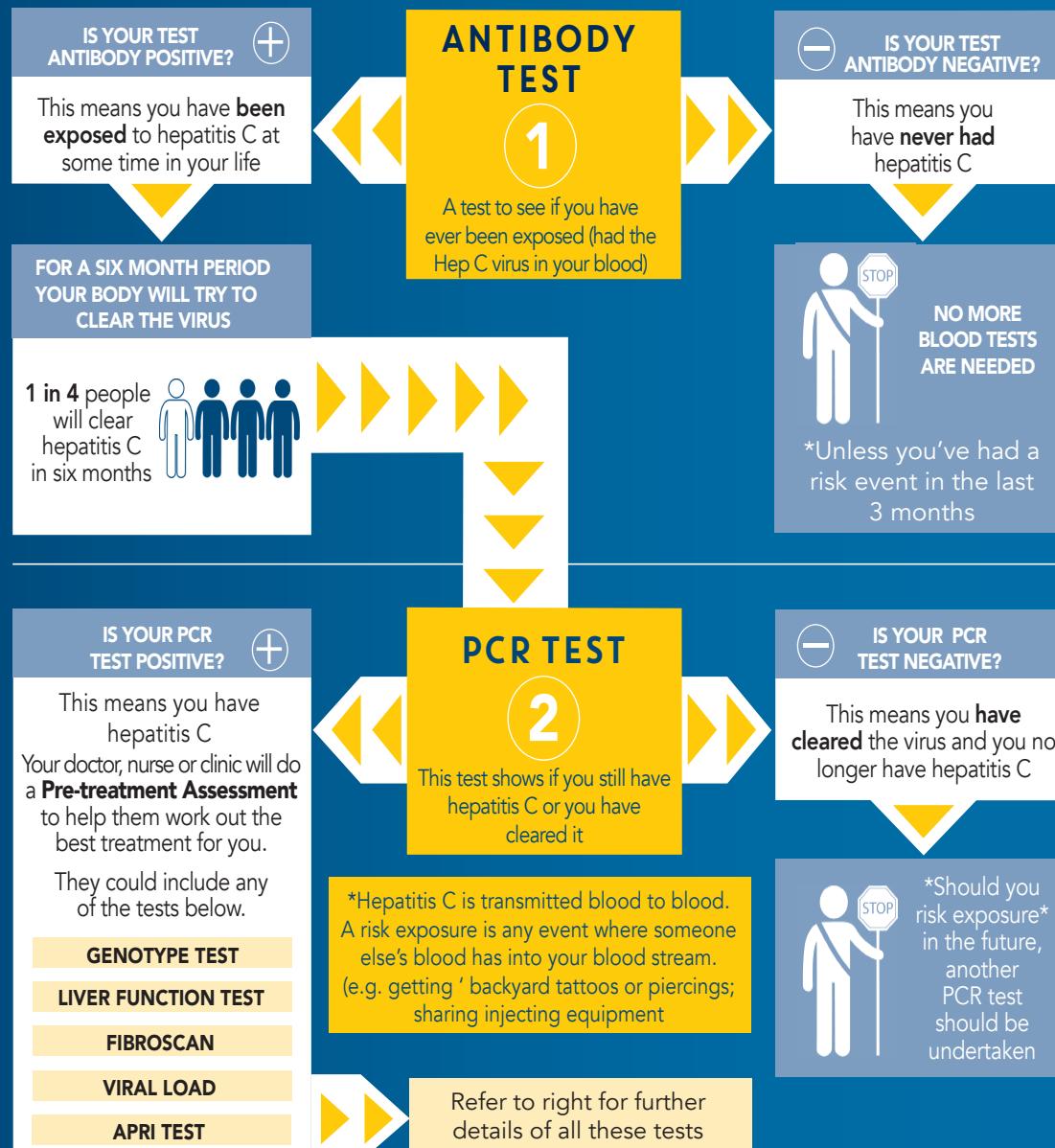


SHOULD I GET TESTED FOR HEPATITIS C?

To test for hepatitis C, start by making an appointment with your doctor, nurse or clinic for a blood test



Below is an outline of information you may need before going on treatment.

- PCR GENOTYPE TEST**
A blood test that checks **which type of hepatitis C virus you might have**. This will determine which combination of treatment will be prescribed for you. The different types of hepatitis C virus are genotypes 1–6.
- PCR VIRAL LOAD**
This blood test **measures the amount of hepatitis C virus in your blood**. This test may be used during your treatment to see if the treatment is working. You will get this test again 12 weeks (minimum) after finishing treatment to check if your treatment is successful. You might also get your viral load checked before starting treatment.
- LIVER FUNCTION TEST**
This is a blood test that **measures how your liver is working**. It can be helpful in letting your doctor, nurse or clinic know more about how well your liver is working by measuring certain levels in your blood.
- FIBROSCAN**
This is a **simple, quick, pain-free way** for a nurse to check for any **liver damage**. It is like an ultrasound and doesn't hurt. It will show up any fibrosis and cirrhosis.
(If a fibroscan is not available an ultrasound might be used instead.)
- APRI TEST**
New ways to check for liver fibrosis are available. The APRI method uses blood tests (liver function test/full blood count). It is a useful tool to determine liver fibrosis when a fibroscan machine is not available.
- OTHER MEDICAL HISTORY**
It's really important to tell your doctor, nurse or clinic if you have been on **treatment for hepatitis C before**. Your doctor, nurse or clinic will also look at your medical history and any other medications you might be taking to work out the best possible treatment for you. They will also discuss with you any other factors that might make your hepatitis C worse, like high alcohol intake, obesity or diabetes.

Once you have been cured through treatment, there is **no need to have another antibody test ever again**. This is because even after cure, the hepatitis C antibody test result will show positive, probably for as long as you live. The antibody test does not mean you have hepatitis C. It is the PCR test which shows whether you have hepatitis C or not.

After cure from treatments, your hepatitis C will not come back, unless you get re-infected by a new exposure to hepatitis C through blood-to-blood contact.