

Harm Reduction Approaches for the Prevention of HCV Transmission via Injection Drug Use

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Disclosures

- Dr. Corcorran does not have any disclosures.

Objectives

- Review the epidemiology of hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection and injection drug use.
- Briefly review other infectious complications of injection drug use.
- Discuss harm reduction strategies to prevent the transmission of HCV among people who inject drugs (PWID).
 - Syringe service programs (SSPs)
 - Medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD)

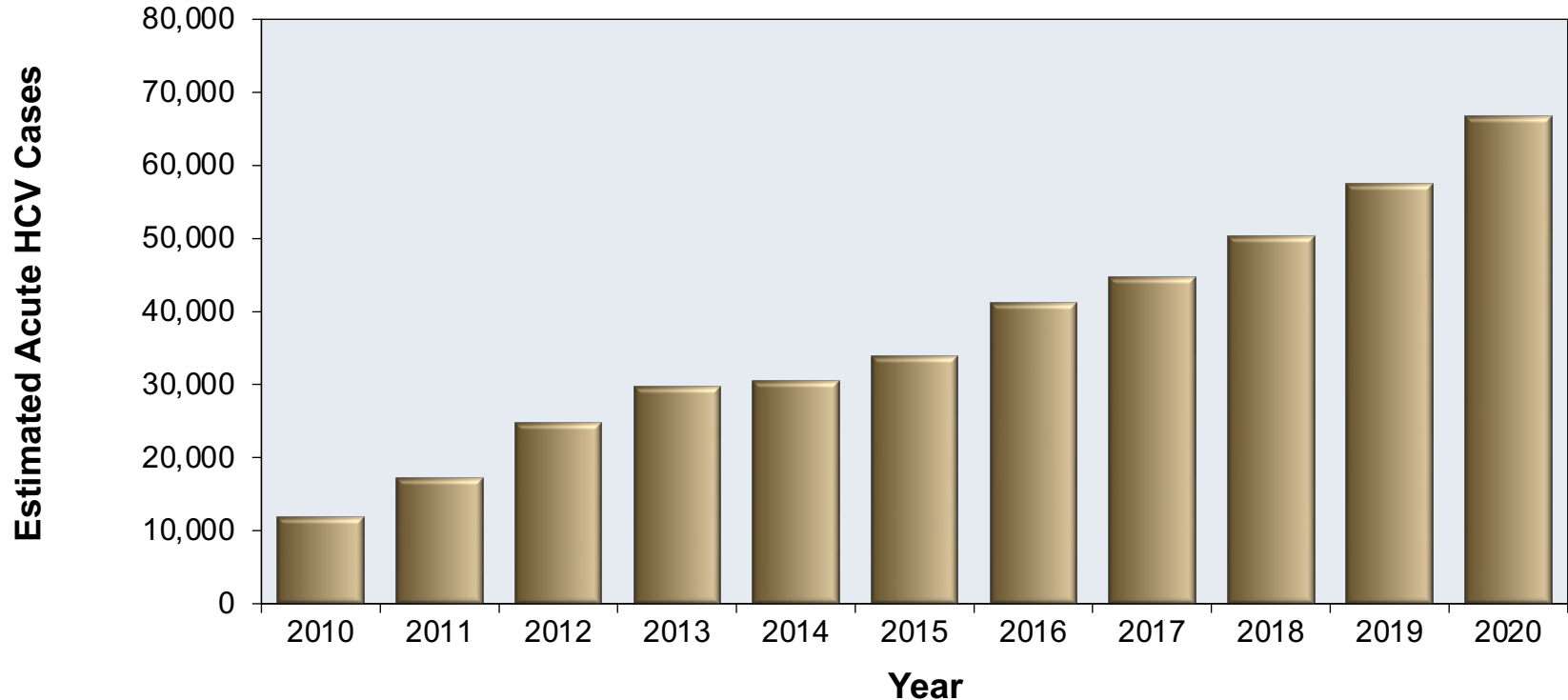
Injection Drug Use and Risk for HCV

- Injection drug use remains the most common risk factor for acquiring HCV in the United States.
- In 2020, among persons with acute HCV and available risk behavior information, 66% reported a history of injection drug use in the prior 6 months.
- Injection drug use is also a driving risk factor for reinfection with HCV, with reinfection rates estimated to be between 5 and 6 per 100 person-years.

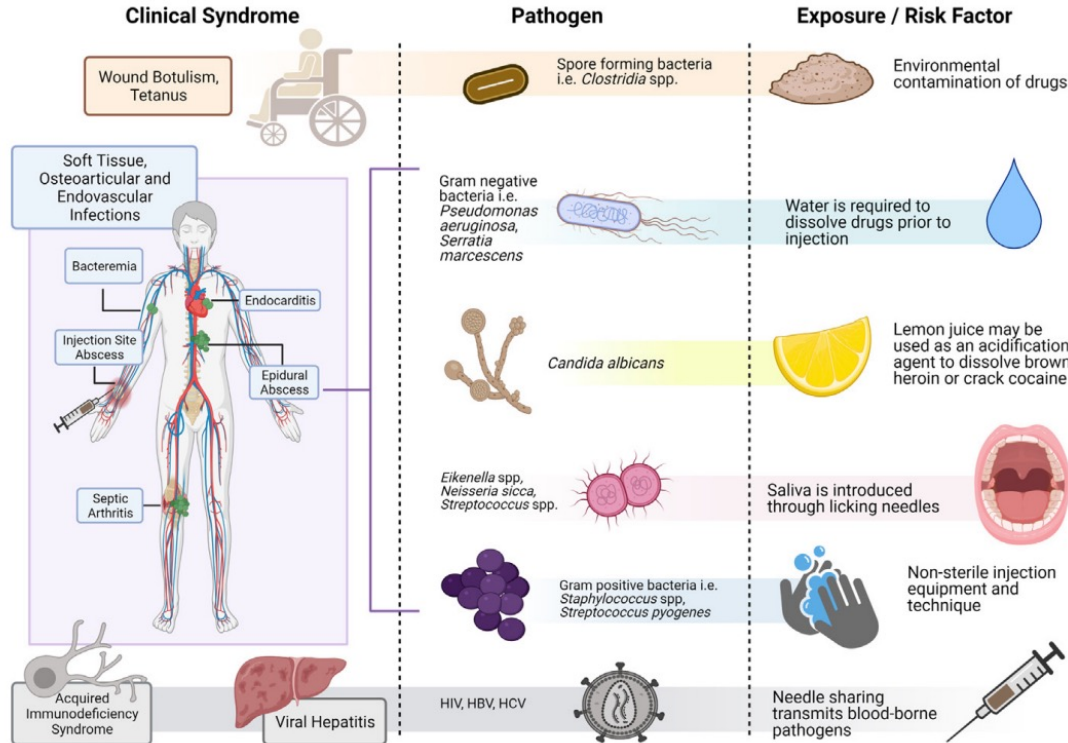
Epidemiology of Injection Drug Use in the United States

- In the past decade, there has been an increase in injection drug use across the U.S., owing to the opioid epidemic and rising rates of stimulant and synthetic opioid use.
- 2011: 774,434 PWID (0.30% of U.S. population ≥ 13 yrs)
 - Likely considerable underestimate d/t basis on pop-level survey data
- 2018: 3,694,500 (1.46% of adult population)

Estimated Case Numbers of Acute Hepatitis C Virus Infection United States, 2010-2020



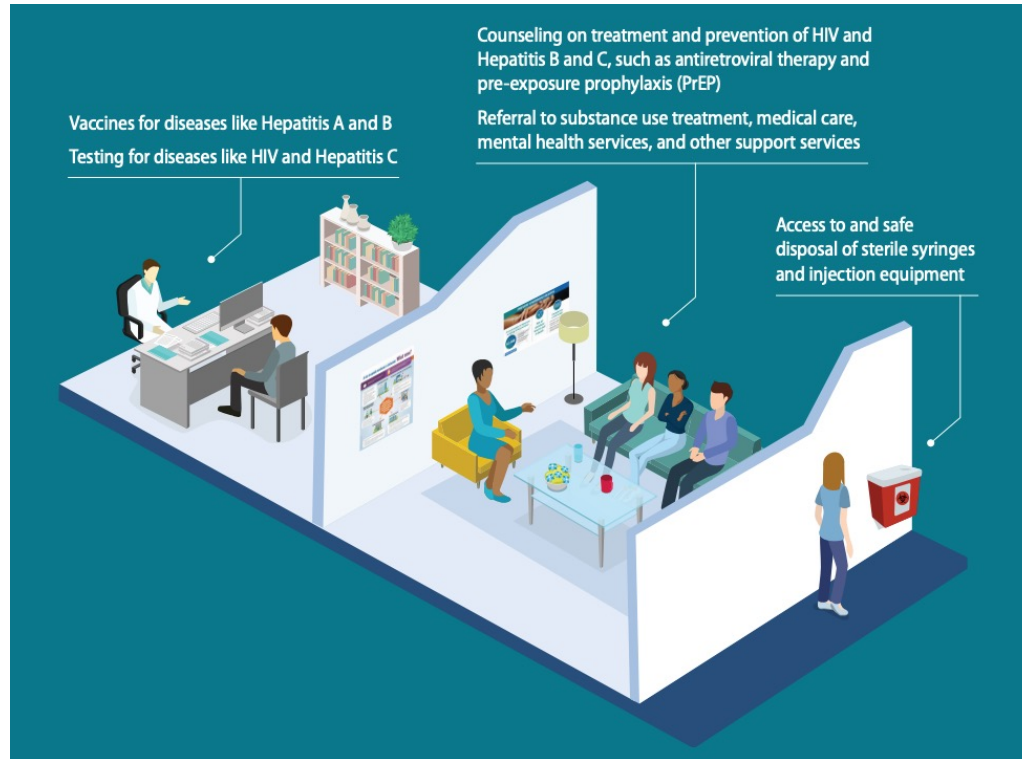
Other Infectious Complication of Injection Drug Use



What is Harm Reduction?

- In the context of substance use, harm reduction is a set of practices and ideas focused on reducing the negative consequences associated with drug use.
- A harm reduction philosophy accepts that substance use occurs in our society and aims to minimize the harmful effects of substance use through strategies that are respectful, non-judgmental, and meet people “where they’re at.”

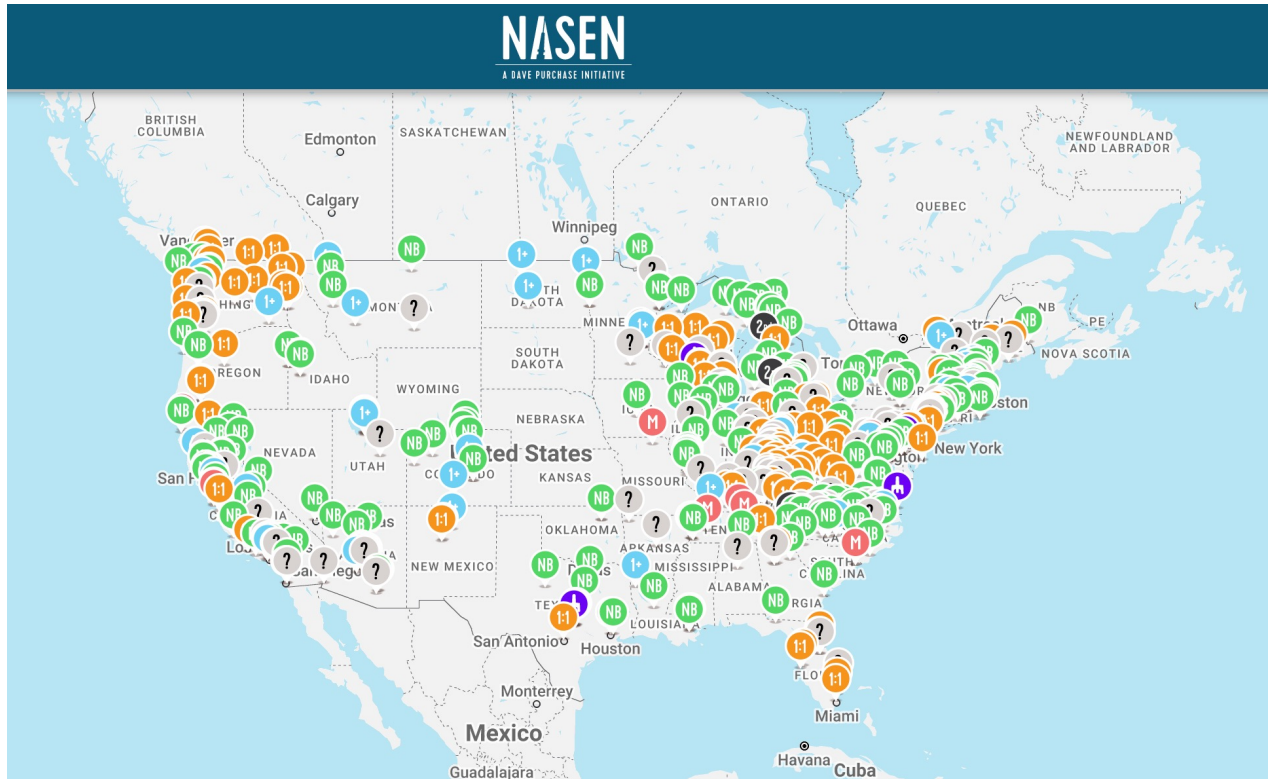
Syringe Service Programs



Injection Drug Use Equipment



Syringe Service Program Locations



Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)

Buprenorphine-naloxone and methadone reduce risk of:

- Acquiring HCV in PWID
- Illicit opioid use, injection drug use, and sharing of injection equipment
- Overdose death among persons on treatment.

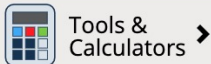
Options for MOUD

Methadone

- Full opioid agonist prescribed and dosed through a methadone maintenance program.
- Patients visit the methadone program daily for dosing.
- Many formulations are available, but the oral liquid form is used in most methadone clinics.

Buprenorphine

- Partial opioid agonist that can be prescribed like other prescription medications in an office setting
- Often co-formulated with naloxone (Suboxone)
- Typically administered transmucosally 1-3 times a day; however, a monthly extended-release injection is also available.



Hepatitis C Online

A free educational website from the
University of Washington Infectious Diseases Education & Assessment (IDEA) program

Contributors

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HCV Medications

Medication Summaries

Prescribing Information

Clinical Studies

Slide Decks

[Learn about medications to treat HCV »](#)



HCV Course Modules

Screening and Diagnosis of Hepatitis C Infection

For any clinician who may encounter persons with hepatitis C virus infection and would like to establish core competence in testing for hepatitis C, counseling patients on preventing hepatitis C transmission, and diagnosing acute hepatitis C infection.

Overview / Quick Reference >

Rapidly access info about Screening and Diagnosis of Hepatitis C Infection

Clinical Challenges

Expert opinions for challenging and controversial cases

Self-Study **3rd Edition** **CNE/CME**

Track your progress and receive CE credit

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