

HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT GETTING HEP C TREATMENT IN PRISONS?

First, how do I check if I have hep C?

There are two blood tests to check for hep C.

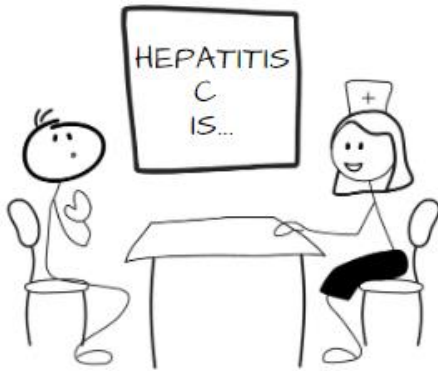
1. **Antibody test** - shows if you have or have ever had hep C in the past (25% of people clear hep C naturally, but everyone will still have antibodies).

If you get a positive antibody test, you need to have a PCR test.

2. **PCR test** (hep C virus test) – shows if the virus is still in your blood, and if you still have hep C.

Can people in prison get hep C treatment?

Yes! People in prison can get treatment. Most centres like to start and finish the treatment while you are inside. Put in a request form to Medical.



If you are due for release you may have to wait to start treatment until you are in the community. You can call Hepatitis Queensland on the Arunta system #12 to find out who is treating for hepatitis C close to where you will be living.

How do I get treatment in prison?

- Put in a form to Medical asking for hepatitis C testing and treatment.
- Be patient, there are waiting lists.
- If you have advanced liver disease or cirrhosis you may need to visit the hospital liver clinic, but you can still get the new treatments.

**HEP C
TREATMENT
HAS
CHANGED**

What is the treatment? How long does it take?

There are two different treatments that are used, Maviret and Eplclusa. You will need to take tablets everyday for 8 – 12 weeks. It is important to take all the tablets.

What are my chance getting cured from these new medications?

The new medications have a 95% cure rate – you won't have hep C anymore!

Are there any bad side effects? Will it affect my mental health?

No, most people will not have any side effects. If they do, they may have a headache or an upset stomach. The new medications will not affect your mental health.

Will it cost anything to go on the treatment?

In most prisons there is no cost. The government pays for treatment both in the prison and in the community. If you start your treatment in the community, you will only need to pay for the co-payment (\$6.60 if you have a health care card or \$41.00 if you are working). The actual medications are free. In some private prisons you may have to pay the \$41.00 co-payment.

What if I am using drugs?

There are no longer restrictions for people to start treatment if they are still using drugs. However, it is important to think about how you can limit your risk of being reinfected with hepatitis C after you have done treatment. In the community, people who inject drugs can access Needle and Syringe Programs and get clean injecting equipment. In prison, you may need to consider your own ability to control getting hep C again, especially without these programs or access to bleach.

However, choosing not to do treatment may impact your liver health. So, consider your options and what is right for you.

Some people are deciding to do treatment with people they use with, to reduce the risk of reinfection. Many people are also doing treatment in prison at the same time as their partners and friends in the community. Researchers say that by working together in this way communities will become completely hep C free within 10 years.



What if I'm on a short sentence and want to do treatment in the community?

You can get testing and treatment in the community at a range of services, many are drug user and prisoner friendly. Some include:

- GP's – all community doctors can treat
- QuIHN (QLD Injectors Health Network) is treating people who use drugs, or have a history of using drugs in Brisbane; Gold Coast; Sunshine Coast and Townsville. Contact QuIHN – call 07 3620 8111
- Kombi Clinic – [facebook.com/HepCKombi](https://www.facebook.com/HepCKombi)
- Sexual Health Clinics
- Alcohol and Drug Services
- Aboriginal Medical Services
- Homelessness services
- Liver clinics still provide treatment, especially people with cirrhosis.

You can find a full list of treatments locations at <https://www.hepqld.asn.au/hep-nav/>

I am going to be on parole when I am released, can they help with treatment?

You can now access testing and treatment through selected Community Corrections sites (parole) across South East Queensland. For more information contact Hepatitis Queensland on Arunta system #12.

Support and Information

If you have a question call Hepatitis Queensland on the free prisoner Arunta system #12. You can request a FREE info pack when you call. Or FREE call in the community 1800 437 222 (1800 HEP ABC)