

VA



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VA doctors offer screening, treatment for hepatitis C virus

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System (TVHS) doctors want to increase Veterans’ awareness of an 8-12-week therapy for the hepatitis C virus (HCV). Unlike older treatments, these medications have minimal side effects and often can be taken as a single pill once a day.

A simple blood test can determine if a Veteran needs the treatment.

“There are no barriers to Veterans being tested; they simply need to ask,” said Dr. Joseph Awad, TVHS Gastroenterologist and Lead HCV Clinician.

Symptoms of hepatitis C are often mild and non-specific, so without a test, the infection can go undiagnosed for several years. However, it can progress and cause cirrhosis of the liver with life-threatening symptoms or even liver cancer.

Treatment can prevent this.

Dr. Awad said TVHS has screened about 75% of its enrolled Veterans in the [risk group identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Veterans who have not been screened are encouraged to ask their TVHS provider for the test.

TVHS is an integrated tertiary health care system comprised of two hospitals, the Alvin C. York Campus in Murfreesboro and the Nashville Campus, as well as more than a dozen community-based outpatient clinics located in Tennessee and Kentucky. TVHS provides ambulatory care, primary care, and secondary care in acute medicine and surgery, specialized tertiary care, transplant services, spinal cord injury outpatient care, and a full range of extended care and mental health services.

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