

US tech accused of infecting 30 with hepatitis C

July 20 2012, by HOLLY RAMER

(AP) — A traveling U.S. hospital technician accused of infecting 30 people with hepatitis C with tainted needles told investigators he "lied to a lot of people" but denied taking or selling drugs.

David Kwiatkowski was arrested Thursday at a Massachusetts hospital where he was receiving treatment. Once he is well enough to be released, he will be transferred to New Hampshire to face federal [drug](#) charges, said U.S. Attorney John Kacavas.

He called Kwiatkowski, 33, a "serial infector" who worked in at least half a dozen states.

Authorities are investigating whether Kwiatkowski also exposed earlier patients to the liver-destroying disease.

An FBI affidavit said Kwiatkowski told police on July 2 he first became aware of his own [hepatitis C](#) diagnosis in May. Kacavas, however, said there is evidence Kwiatkowski had the liver-destroying disease since at least June 2010.

Investigators believe Kwiatkowski stole syringes containing fentanyl, a powerful anesthetic more potent than morphine, and injected himself with them. They said he then put another liquid, such as saline, into the syringes, which were later used for patients. They said a search of his vehicle found an empty fentanyl syringe and several needles.

"I did not take any drugs or do any drugs ... and I'm gonna stick to that," Kwiatkowski told investigators.

Kwiatkowski was what is known as a "traveler," a technician hired by hospitals for temporary stints around the country.

Hepatitis C is a blood-borne viral infection that can cause liver disease and chronic health issues. Altogether, 31 people, including Kwiatkowski, have tested positive for the same strain of the disease since the investigation began in late May.

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