

Public health-primary care testing has high uptake, doesn't identify hidden hepatitis C

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Electron micrographs of hepatitis C virus purified from cell culture. Scale bar is 50 nanometers. Credit: Center for the Study of Hepatitis C, The Rockefeller University.

A strategy to test the general population for hepatitis B and C viruses in areas of high prevalence had high test uptake but did not detect hidden chronic hepatitis C infections.

The study, a public health-primary care collaboration, sought to test individuals between 40 and 70 years of age (n=6,743) in two Dutch hepatitis hotspots.

All [family physicians](#) in the hotspots invited their patients to be tested, with implementation and follow-up by the regional public health service.

Test uptake was higher than expected at 51 percent (n=3,434), however no active/[chronic hepatitis](#) C infections were detected.

This strategy, the authors surmise, could be effective in countries with higher rates of hepatitis or other infectious diseases, but is not recommended for low prevalence countries.

More information: Jeanne Heil et al. Detecting Hepatitis B and C by Combined Public Health and Primary Care Birth Cohort Testing, *The Annals of Family Medicine* (2018). [DOI: 10.1370/afm.2166](https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.2166)

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