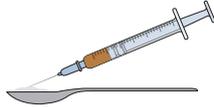


Hepatitis C is a serious liver infection. It is passed from person to person in the following ways:

Sharing equipment for injecting drugs.

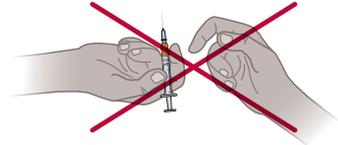
This includes syringes, needles, water, spoons and mixing containers, filters and swabs.



There's a risk when injecting crystal meth, anabolic steroids, heroin, crack cocaine or any other drug.



Always use your own equipment. Don't share, lend or borrow equipment.



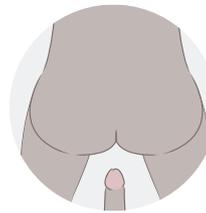
Sharing straws or banknotes to snort drugs.

It's safer for each person to use a different straw or roll of paper.



During sex.

This mostly affects gay men. There's more information in another leaflet in this series.



From mother to child during pregnancy or childbirth.



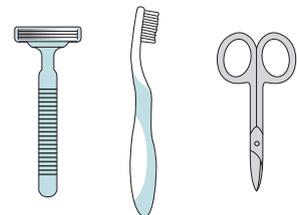
From medical procedures and **blood transfusions** carried out in some poorer countries or in Spain more than 20 years ago.



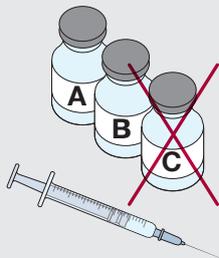
Tattooing or piercing, if equipment is not sterilised properly.



Sharing razors, toothbrushes, nail scissors and other items that could cause bleeding.



Unlike hepatitis A and hepatitis B, there is **no vaccine** against hepatitis C.



Important points:

- When the blood of a person who has hepatitis C enters the bloodstream of another person, that person could get hepatitis C.
- Tiny and unseen traces of blood can lead to hepatitis C infection.
- To avoid infection, don't share or re-use objects which could have been in contact with another person's blood.

Note:

The hepatitis C virus can live outside the body for longer than HIV and is more likely to be passed on.