

52 Weeks to Health: World Hepatitis Day

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#WORLDHEPATITISDAY

~400 million people are infected
with chronic viral hepatitis worldwide



Free Hepatitis Screening Available

You May Have Hepatitis and not know it: July 28 is World Hepatitis Testing Day

As part of the 52 Weeks of Public Health campaign, the Kentucky Department of Public Health(DPH) within the Cabinet of Health and Family Services (CHFS) is highlighting World Hepatitis Day. This is in honor of the birthday of Dr. Baruch Blumberg (1925 – 2011) and his discovery of the Hepatitis virus in 1967, which led to his development of the first Hepatitis B vaccine in 1969. For these achievements, Dr. Blumberg was awarded the Nobel Prize.

Chronic Hepatitis infections can cause inflammation of the liver that can lead to cirrhosis, liver cancer, and death. Viral Hepatitis is among the top 10 infectious disease killers. Both chronic Hepatitis B and chronic Hepatitis C virus infections cause approximately 80% of the world's liver cancer. Viral Hepatitis is a major global health threat with approximately 350 million people worldwide living with chronic Hepatitis. Kentucky has the highest incidence of Hepatitis C, a rate at seven times the national average. Estimates are that about 20,000 Kentuckians could be living with chronic Hepatitis B and about 60,000 Kentuckians could be living with chronic Hepatitis C virus infections, which is especially dangerous.

“A coordinated, comprehensive approach for early detection with screening, linkage to care, and treatment can improve the prognosis, and decrease the mortality and morbidity of viral hepatitis throughout the Commonwealth.” said DPH Commissioner Dr. Hiram C. Polk, Jr.

Kathy Sanders, the Kentucky Viral Hepatitis Prevention and Control Program Coordinator, is part of a coalition which includes The University of Louisville, the Kentucky Department for Public Health, Louisville Metro Department of Public Health, and others planning the first World Hepatitis Testing Day activities in Louisville. “The first year, we are concentrating our efforts in Louisville at over 20 hepatitis-testing sites throughout Louisville in community settings. This year is a model for upcoming years and we are hopeful to expand our activities to other sites next year.”, said Kathy Sanders.

More information including testing sites and times is available at this link:
<http://www.kentuckyonehealth.org/hepatitisday>

Video is available at this link.: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vcCcOJHUDno>