

# Hepatitis C Virus Pre- and Post-Test Checklists

**Confidential** hepatitis C Virus (HCV) pre- and post-test discussions can significantly affect how the client responds to testing and test results. When **using simple language** and individualized to a client's needs, these discussions: provide important preventive and health promotion information, enable better disease management, and encourage continued engagement with health and social care.

## HCV Antibody Pre-test Discussion Checklist

- Discuss the reasons for the HCV test (client or provider initiated), such as modes of transmission.
- Provide information about the testing process, including:
  - An explanation of the HCV antibody test, including window period and the need for HCV RNA test (HCV-PCR) if the antibody test is positive.
  - The time it takes for results to become available.
- Explain that Public Health receives positive test results and may contact client.
- Discuss impact of possible positive result for client and others, including transmission prevention, and confidentiality and disclosure issues.
- Waiting for test results can be challenging. Discuss supports the client might need to access during the waiting period.
- Discuss a follow-up plan to obtain results and vaccines available for those at-risk/infected.
- Check the client's understanding of the information provided.
- Confirm if the client is now ready to proceed with testing.

## HCV Antibody Post-test Discussion Checklists

### Negative

### HCV Antibody Test

### Positive

- Explain the meaning of a negative test result and confirm client understanding.
- Discuss indications for further testing, considering window periods, ongoing risk behaviours, or being immune compromised. Make a follow-up plan, if applicable.
- For those at-risk, explore resources needed such as education, harm reduction, vaccines, social and other resources, as appropriate.
- Make referrals and encourage engagement with health care and other support services, as needed.
- Explain the meaning of a positive test result (i.e., the client has been exposed to hepatitis C).

**Receiving a diagnosis of HCV is complex and can be life changing. It is important to convey the test results and relevant information in a positive and culturally safe way that encourages engagement and facilitates follow-up planning with the client.**

- Provide time for the client to process the result and confirm client's understanding.
- Explain the need for an HCV RNA test to determine if the viral infection is still active.
- Discuss potential for stigma and that **disclosure is voluntary**.
- Discuss modes of transmission, harm reduction, vaccines, social and other resources, as appropriate.
- Make a follow-up plan, make referrals, and encourage engagement with other health care and support services, as needed.



