



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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May is Hepatitis Awareness Month

LAS VEGAS – Are you at risk for hepatitis? May is Hepatitis Awareness Month. For information about the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) hepatitis awareness program, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/HepatitisAwareness/>. The CDC has posted a Hepatitis Risk Assessment tool: <http://www.cdc.gov/HEPATITIS/riskassessment/> and encourages people to discuss their risks with a healthcare provider.

The Southern Nevada Health District and Community Counseling Center are partners in an education campaign that offers testing to the community. The project is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services and Administration. Community Counseling Center, 714 E. Sahara Ave., Ste. 101, provides HIV and hepatitis screenings and administers appropriate hepatitis immunizations in Clark County. For more information regarding testing or eligibility for testing, contact the Community Counseling Center, (702) 369-8700.

Recently, the CDC recommended hepatitis C testing for people born between 1945 and 1965 and estimates that one in 30 baby boomers is infected with hepatitis C. Most are not aware of their infection. People who are infected with hepatitis C can be asymptomatic for decades. Hepatitis C is more common among people who received blood transfusions or organ transplants prior to 1992, and intravenous drug users. The CDC recommends that anyone with a history of intravenous drug use or unprotected sexual contact get tested for hepatitis B and C. Chronic hepatitis infections are a leading cause of liver cancer and the most common reason for liver transplantation. An estimated 4.4 million Americans are living with chronic hepatitis infection. There are immunizations to protect against hepatitis A and B.

In addition, the CDC estimates that about 25 percent of HIV-positive people are also infected with hepatitis C and 80 percent of injection drug users with HIV infection also have hepatitis C. HIV-co-infection more than triples the risk for liver disease, liver failure and liver related deaths from hepatitis C.

Updated information about the Southern Nevada Health District can be found on Facebook www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict, on YouTube www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict or Twitter: www.twitter.com/SNHDinfo. The health district is now available in Spanish on Twitter www.twitter.com/TuSNHD. Don’t have a Twitter account? Follow the health district on your phone by texting “follow SNHDinfo” to 40404.