

Health-e Bytes™

An eNewsletter published by Hepatitis Foundation International

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Dear Friends,

We hope you enjoy the inaugural edition of the Hepatitis Foundation International's *Health-e Bytes™* E-Newsletter.

As we approach our 20th year anniversary we look to expand our services, resources and information for you. As we look toward the future with the launch of *Health-e Bytes™*, we assure you we have been thoughtful in our approach and have heard your comments and requests. We look forward to unveiling new additions in the coming months.

We hope you find the additional information and materials useful. Please go to HFI's Facebook page and/or our Twitter account and tell us what you think about the new newsletter. Here's to your best health!

Your Hepatitis Foundation International Team

Hepatitis Foundation International Observes World Hepatitis Day

This is hepatitis.
Know it.
Confront it.



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HFI Launches Powerful Live-R-Die© DVD

Targets college students with life-shattering images of the consequences related to alcohol use and abuse. Live-R-Die© fills an enormous knowledge gap that can save lives.. .

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Hepatitis Foundation International Observes World Hepatitis Day

This is hepatitis. Know it. Confront it.

World Hepatitis Day (WHD) will prompt people to talk about viral hepatitis and the heavy disease burden it presents globally. Hepatitis viruses A, B, C, D and E can cause acute and chronic infection and inflammation of the liver that can lead to cirrhosis and liver cancer. Worldwide 500 million people are living with either chronic hepatitis B or C. Although this is far higher than the prevalence of HIV or any cancer, hepatitis is often ignored, awareness is inexplicably low, and the majority of those infected are often unaware. Those infected are at high risk of developing severe chronic liver disease and can unknowingly transmit the virus to other people. The long-term objective of WHD is to prevent new infections and to deliver real improvements in health outcomes for people living with hepatitis B and C.

Hepatitis B and C are spread through contact with blood and body fluids. Hepatitis C is the most common blood-borne infection in the United States. Additionally, there are 43,000 new cases of hepatitis B infection in the U.S each year. For health care professionals and patient advocates, World Hepatitis Day is vitally important to continue to raise awareness of chronic hepatitis B and C and drive policy change for improvements in health outcomes for people living with hepatitis. Thelma King Thiel, CEO of Hepatitis Foundation International said, "World Hepatitis Day offers a great opportunity to get people more engaged and aware about hepatitis, especially about how its contracted, how to decrease risks and getting tested."



Know it... Confront it

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends anyone who has been exposed to blood through blood transfusion, non-sterile equipment, tattooing, or sharing a needle while injecting illegal drugs should be tested for both hepatitis B and C. The hepatitis C recommendations propose all U.S. baby boomers, those born between 1945 and 1965; get a blood test to determine if

they are infected with hepatitis C. The hepatitis B vaccine provides excellent protection against hepatitis B infection and the vaccine is covered at no cost under Medicare Part B for certain eligible individuals at high or intermediate risk.

To share information about World Hepatitis Day awareness on Twitter use the hashtag #WorldHepDay.

Health-e Bytes

July/August 2013

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HFI in the Know...

HFI Launches Powerful Live-R-Die© DVD

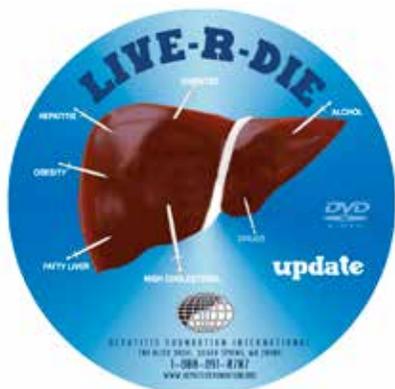
A powerful new dynamic DVD targets college students with life shattering images of the consequences related to alcohol use and abuse. Titled **Live-R-Die©** the power packed production is the result of decades of research in effective techniques to motivate young adults to avoid the life altering consequences of alcohol and drug abuse.

This new tool enhances messages by Dr. Linda Hancock, Director of the Virginia Commonwealth University Wellness Resource Center who points out how one night of drinking can destroy the future of her "precious students" who miss a deadline for applying for a scholarship or internship, crash a car and wind up in the hospital, or choke to death while vomiting the toxins in the alcohol they have guzzled down.

Unfortunately the majority of young adults entering college are uninformed about the critical role the liver plays in their health and life itself and how the chemicals in alcohol and designer drugs can destroy this life sustaining refinery and detoxifying organ.

The lack of knowledge about the liver provided them in high school about how their life depends on a healthy liver leaves them vulnerable to the devastating consequences of binge drinking, drug miss use and abuse in addition to exposure to HIV, hepatitis, STDs and uncontrolled violent behaviors. **Live-R-Die©** fills an enormous knowledge gap that can save lives.

To order, contact Media@HepatitisFoundation.org.



Upcoming Viral Hepatitis Summits



- **Sept. 19** – [Missouri Viral Hepatitis Summit](#)
- **Oct 4** – [West Virginia Viral Hepatitis Summit](#)
- **Other Important Events** – [HFI Calendar](#)

National Health Observances

August 2013

Children's Eye Health and Safety Month
 Psoriasis Awareness Month
 Relay For Life
 1-7 Breastfeeding Week Celebrations
 11-17 Health Center Week

September 2013

Alzheimer's Month and Alzheimer's Action Day
 Baby Safety Month
 Cholesterol Education Month
 Healthy Aging Month
 Leukemia, Lymphoma and
 Myeloma Awareness Month
 Pain Awareness Month
 Prostrate Health Month
 Thyroid Cancer Awareness Month
 1 MDA Labor Day Telethon
 8-14 Environmental Services
 and Housekeeping Week
 8-14 Nephrology Nurses Week
 8-14 Suicide Prevention Week
 15-21 Child Passenger Safety Week
 18 School Backpack Awareness Day
 21 Seat Check Saturday
 25 Women's Health and Fitness Day
 28 Family Health and Fitness Day



Lifestyle...

Hepatitis A, Berries and You



We live in a world of invisible viruses and bacteria. Consumers have faith in food distributors that the fruits and vegetables eaten daily are not contaminated with feces from an infected field worker. Recent outbreaks have made consumers more aware of every day potential risks.

The recent contaminated berries became contaminated with the hepatitis A virus (HAV) when someone picking or processing the berries had hepatitis and wasn't diligent about wearing gloves or hand washing after using the restroom. Consumers are left to wonder, are there "porta potties" or facilities in the fields where fieldworkers can wash their hands after going to the bathroom? Growers and processors should be screening workers for symptoms of hepatitis A. Vaccinations to prevent HAV should be accessible to anyone in professions that involve food preparation.

Hepatitis A can mimic the flu and go undiagnosed for several weeks. Most individuals recover quickly; however about 1 % can develop serious liver damage that ultimately may require a liver transplant. Cooking or pasteurizing food is one of the only reliable ways to kill the HAV virus. If you are exposed to hepatitis A, the vaccine given within two weeks of exposure can end the infection.

"Do Not Take If..."

Advertisements for drugs on television often warn consumers should not take the drug being promoted if they have a liver problem. Unfortunately, most people are unaware of the status of their liver because the liver is a non complaining organ. In addition, consumers are unaware that the drugs they take are processed through their liver where injury can occur.

Recent studies in Iceland among 250,000 adults identified 96 cases of drug induced liver injury or 19 cases per 100,000. Many medications, such as chlorpromazine, azathioprine and sulfasalazine can cause liver injury.

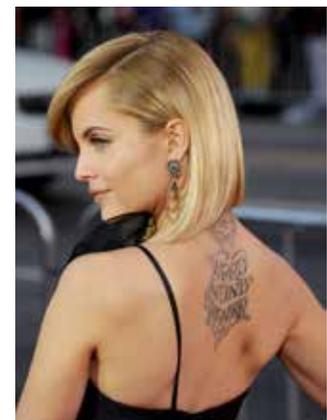
Amoxicillin seems to be the most common cause with azathioprine the most hepatotoxic. This study did not include the drug acetaminophen - which is known to be hepatotoxic (liver damaging) and life threatening when taken more frequently and in larger doses than prescribed.

It is critically important to inform healthcare professionals about all the medications being taken, including over the counter drugs, to avoid any adverse reactions that may cause liver injury. To become an informed and educated consumer/patient and caregiver – see the National Library of Medicine website DailyMed and find out drug information including warnings and adverse side effects.

Where Do Celebrities Get Their Tattoos?

Celebrities with visible tattoos are careful to have their tattoos done by trained professionals in licensed facilities. A new study by Dr. Fritz Francois of New York University Medical Center found that people with the hepatitis C virus were almost 4 times more likely to report having a tattoo. Unfortunately, many states do not have licensing requirements and even when they do, surveys of facilities, procedures and equipment are conducted only once or twice a year. To avoid the risk of contracting hepatitis C or other infections, make sure you choose a reputable place that uses appropriate standards. This includes a clean work space without blood spatters, single-use disposable needle kits, and tattoo artists wearing disposable gloves.

Hepatitis C is a blood borne disease that can be transmitted through breaks in the skin during tattooing or body piercing with contaminated instruments. While injection drug use accounts for 60% of new hepatitis C cases every year, 20% of cases have no history of injected drug use according to the CDC. Hepatitis C is a disease that can go unidentified for 10 or even 20 years.



Lifestyle...

Binge Drinking = Cluster Bomb

Binge drinking amplifies injury to the liver when there was pre exposure due to chronic alcohol consumption. According to Dr. Shivendra Sjukla, at the University of Missouri School of Medicine binge drinking creates an inflammatory response in the liver that is like a cluster bomb, sending out various damaging signals to systems in the body. As the main metabolic center for the body, the liver affects nutrient and drug metabolism and distribution, as well as the production of multiple agents that are needed for the heart, kidney, blood vessels and brain to function properly. If those organs are impaired and working at a lower level of function, then a whole host of physiological processes is affected.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism defines binge drinking for women as having four or more drinks in two hours; for men, it is five or more drinks in two hours.

Heroin, Cocaine Use On The Decline?

According to the United Nations (U.N.) 2013 World Drug Report, overall global drug consumption has remained stable. In 2011, the number of drug-related deaths was estimated at 211,000 referring to the number of drug users with dependence or drug-use disorders.

"While the use of traditional drugs, such as heroin and cocaine, seems to be declining in some parts of the world, prescription drug abuse and new psychoactive substance abuse is growing," the Report stated.

Heroin use in Europe and cocaine use in the U.S. appear to be falling while the cocaine market is expanding in South America and in emerging economies in Asia.

Revised data from the 2013 World Drug Report also indicated the prevalence of people injecting drugs who are also infected with HIV, the virus that causes

AIDS, was sharply lower than previously estimated. In 2011, about 1.6 million people between 15 and 64 years of age who injected drugs were living with HIV, a 46% decline from 3 years earlier. The overall number of people using needles to take drugs was also lower.

The reduced figures are "in large part a result of the availability of more reliable information on HIV prevalence among people who inject drugs", the report said.

Criminals have been quick to tap into the lucrative market of new psychoactive substances while the law lags behind, the U.N. office said. Africa is becoming a significant target for the trafficking and production of illicit substances.



Obesity Threatens U.S. National Security

According to the advocacy group, Mission Readiness comprised of more than 100 retired generals, admirals and other senior military leaders, the single largest reason among 75% of young American ages 17 – 24 being unable to join the military is due to the fact that they are physically unfit. One quarter of those are unfit due to obesity.

There isn't a single branch of the military that isn't feeling the weight of this problem on its recruitment numbers. Ret. General Jack Wheeler commented, "One year we missed our recruiting objective by over 7,000. We had enough young volunteers coming to the

door wanting to join the Army, but they failed to qualify."

While the US Military stands ready to protect the American people against threats both domestic and abroad, the challenge of recruitment has hit a major roadblock. Young recruits are just too fat. According to Carson Livers, a Marine recruit from Little River said, "It is really making it hard to find the cream of the crop that the military is looking for now."



Grand Rounds...

Victory for HBV Infected Medical Students

Recently, the CDC offered guidance on health care workers or students with hepatitis B. In performing almost all duties that medical or health professional students would perform, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention concluded that having hepatitis B would not pose a risk to patients. The CDC identified only these medical procedures as posing some risk; most of which are not performed by medical students, including: "major abdominal and vaginal hysterectomy, caesarean section, vaginal deliveries, and oral or maxillofacial surgery." The Justice Department found the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey which denied acceptance of students with hepatitis B to be illegal discrimination.

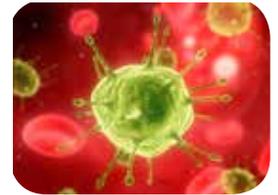


Overactive Gene Linked to Aggressive Liver Cancer

Some patients with hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) appear to have overactivity of a gene that is most often linked to embryonic stem cells and early human development. This results in a worse prognosis than other patients with hepatocellular carcinoma according to authors from National University of Singapore.

The gene, called SALL4, appeared to help slow the growth of the cancer quite drastically. Using SALL4 as a biomarker in patients

who over express this gene will be most useful to help figure out liver cancer patients most in need of treatment, said Dr. Snorri Thorgeirsson at the U.S. National Cancer Institute.



Research Targets HCV's Ability to Reproduce

Researchers at Dankook University in South Korea are investigating how the hepatitis C virus reproduces. Agents called RNA aptamers bind and disable the NS5B replicase enzyme involved in replication of the virus. The agents inhibited replication of two variants of HCV – genotypes 1b and 2a – in cultured human liver cells without inducing toxicity or innate immunity. The aptamers were modified for liver-specific delivery intravenously to mice that entered liver tissue at concentrations that suggested therapeutically effective quantities could be achieved in human patients.

Psychological, lifestyle and social predictors of hepatitis C treatment response

In 34 studies (reported in Liver International, July 2013, aimed at increasing cure rates for Hepatitis C,) barriers to treatment adherence and completion were systematically reviewed for evidence on the psychological, lifestyle and social determinants of achieving sustained virological response (SVR) to therapy.

Of the factors that predict response to treatment, Asian ethnicity was an independent predictor of SVR. An indirect relationship between diet and SVR was identified, with non-responders to treatment consuming more polyunsaturated fatty acids, fats and carbohydrates than those who attained SVR. The effect of alcohol consumption relied on the amount consumed; fewer than 30 grams daily had no effect on SVR, whereas >70 grams daily had an adverse impact on a patient's ability to achieve SVR, with termination rates up to 44% in those who drank >2 drinks a day. Patients with psychiatric illnesses had comparable SVR rates to controls if they continued psychological therapy (average 42%). Those who drink limited amounts of alcohol or have psychiatric disorders should be offered treatment for their disease, with adjunctive education and support to improve treatment completion.



In the Pipeline...

Phase III Trials Address Advanced Liver Cancer

Most people are diagnosed with hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) when it's in an advanced stage. At that point the standard treatment option is a drug called sorafenib (Nexavar). Bayer HealthCare has started to enroll patients in a Phase III trial to evaluate the efficacy and safety of regorafenib for the treatment of patients with HCC whose disease has progressed after treatment with sorafenib, said Dr. Kemal Malik of Bayer Health Care. Regorafenib is an oral multi-kinase inhibitor that targets oncogenesis by inhibiting multiple protein kinases that play a role in the growth of new blood vessels and impact tumor growth.



HCC is often hard to detect early because signs and symptoms do not usually appear until it is in its later stages. The majority of patients diagnosed with HCC has the advanced stage of the disease and may not be eligible for potentially curative therapies.

Helping Hands

Next year the Hepatitis Foundation International (HFI) is celebrating its twenty-year anniversary! This is a big milestone for HFI. We have made a lot of progress in 20 years and have much more to accomplish. The Hepatitis Foundation International needs your support. Your gift of \$5, \$10, \$25, \$100, \$250, \$500 or whatever you can give makes all the difference...we are working on your behalf to serve you and honor those loved ones that are suffering from hepatitis or diseases that affect the liver. But we need your help now more than ever.

If you want to make a donation to HFI by a debit or credit card, rest assured you can donate securely online, access HFI's donation web page [here](#).

It is fast and easy and will only take a moment of your time. If you prefer to make your donation by phone you can contact us toll free on (800) 891-0707.



Thank you for joining with us!

Advocacy Alert: Landmark CURE Legislation



The Hepatitis Foundation International (HFI) supports CURE (Communities United with Religious Leaders to Eliminate HIV/AIDS) ACT of 2013. As a significant piece of legislation to eliminate the burden of HIV/AIDS among minority communities, CURE is designed to increase awareness concerning the continuing devastating effects of HIV/AIDS in minority communities, i.e., (African American, Hispanic/Latinos, Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaska Natives).

In the United States an estimated 1.1 million people are living with HIV. As reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), racial and ethnic minorities accounted for nearly 71% percent of the newly diagnosed cases of HIV infection. CDC also reported 84% percent of minority children were infected with HIV. This underlies the fact that although people with HIV currently live longer, this epidemic continues to have a disproportionate impact on racial and ethnic minority communities nationwide.

CURE is important since it is solution-oriented legislation that proposes the establishment of a grant program through key federal health care agencies and focuses on viable solutions to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

T.I.P.S.

The following information, HFI T.I.P.S. (To Insure Public Smarts), are provided as free healthcare resources and information:

- Hepatitis Foundation International offers a [free discount prescription drug card](#):



- Easy to navigate website to learn more about hepatitis B: [HEPBSmart](#)
- How does the Affordable Care Act help people like me: [Healthcare.gov](#)

