

Common questions for pregnant people with Hepatitis C:

Is it safe to breastfeed my baby?

- Yes! Hep C is not transferred through breastmilk.

What kind of delivery should I have?

- You can have a vaginal delivery or a C-section. Neither route of delivery has been shown to increase transmission to your baby.

Is it safe for me to hug and kiss my baby?

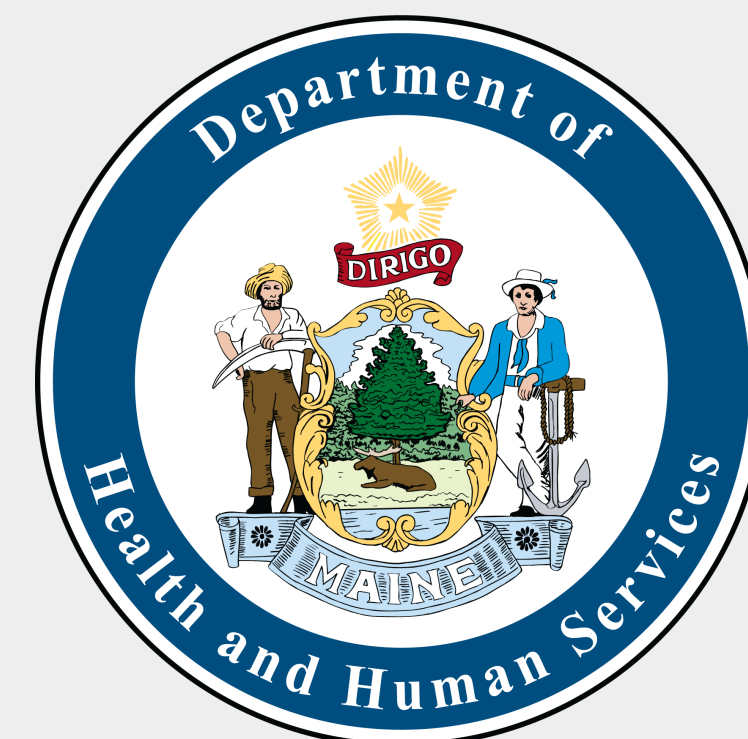
- Yes! Hep C is NOT transmitted through saliva, coughing, or sneezing. Hep C is spread through blood. You can hug and kiss your baby without fear of spreading Hep C.



OTHER RESOURCES

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
1-800-821-5821
www.maine.gov/dhhs/hepatitis

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/hepatitis



Hepatitis C & Pregnancy

A Guide for Pregnant People with Hep C



Maine CDC 2022

What is Perinatal Hepatitis C?

If you have Hepatitis C (Hep C) and are pregnant, Hep C can be passed to your baby during pregnancy or during birth. This is known as perinatal Hep C.

Mother to baby transmission is the leading cause of Hep C in children.

There is currently no way to prevent transmission of Hep C to your baby during pregnancy or during birth. There are things to do to protect your baby's health.



What can I do for myself if I have Hep C?

Once you deliver your baby, medicine is available to **cure** your Hep C.

Taking control of your Hep C will help protect your future babies from Hep C and protect the health of your liver.

Avoid drinking alcohol and review all medications with your doctor, especially if you are also taking medication for HIV.

Why should I pay attention to Hep C and my baby?

Hep C can impact the development and the health of your baby, for the rest of their life.

Most Hep C positive children show little or no sign of being sick. The only way to know if your baby has Hep C is with a blood test.

Not receiving care for Hep C can lead to permanent liver damage.

Tell your baby's doctor if you have Hep C!



It is important to let your baby's doctor know you have Hep C.

Talk to your baby's doctor about getting your baby tested for Hep C.

About 1 in 20 babies born to pregnant people with Hep C will develop long term Hep C infection. That chance increases if the pregnant person also has HIV.

Knowing your baby's Hep C status will help you get the care they need.

When should I get my baby tested for Hep C?



After 18 months of age, test for Hep C Antibody

- If positive, follow up with a Hep C viral load test to confirm

OR

**After 2 months of age, test for Hep C RNA
AND test again after 18 months of age**

**HAVE QUESTIONS?
CALL 800-821-5821**

Protect your loved ones.

Hep C is transferred through blood. Do not share items that can get blood on them such as needles, razors, toothbrushes, or nail clippers. Wear condoms when having sex.

No vaccine is available to protect either a baby or mother from Hep C, but you should keep all of your child's vaccinations up to date.