California Department of Public Health  
Healthcare-Associated Hepatitis B and C (HBV/HCV)  
Investigation Quicksheet Algorithm

**Step 1:** Confirm that the case definition is met for acute HCV or HBV. 1, 2

**Step 2:** Interview case patient to identify traditional, healthcare, and other risk factors during the exposure period: 1, 2
- HBV - 45-160 days
- HCV - 2 weeks–6 months
Provide education to patients and their contacts about disease and transmission risk.

**Step 3:** Review and report to CDPH suspected healthcare-associated acute HBV or HCV 1, 2
- Notify CDPH Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAI) Program
- Submit case report form to CDPH Immunization Branch (IZB). IZB will compare facilities against database.
- If status of sexual and/or household contacts is unclear, test contacts
- If contacts not infected, obtain blood specimen and proceed to step 4

**Step 4:** Further assess healthcare encounters during incubation period, paying special attention to high risk or “red flag,” procedures or facilities. Consult with the HAI Program. 3, 4
- If multiple healthcare settings visited, go to step 4A then 4B
- If single healthcare setting visited, go directly to 4B

**Step 4A:** When multiple healthcare settings are identified, prioritize additional investigation based on:
- Prior complaints
- Types of procedures
- Timing of procedures
- Settings and procedures where outbreaks have been documented 4

**Step 4B:** Recommended steps to investigate single and priority healthcare settings:
- Gather information on types of services provided by facility
- Review records for the index patient, including invasive procedures, dates, and staff involved
- Perform onsite visit if necessary
- Review infection control policies and procedures
- Obtain list(s) of patients seen during the same time period as index
- Identify additional cases through record review and registry match
- Consider notification of appropriate regulatory authorities

**Step 5:** Respond based on assessment findings, in consultation with the HAI Program 3
- If unsafe practices identified, (e.g. syringe reuse) immediately advise the facility to correct their actions
- Depending on findings, additional steps might include: patient notification, targeted lookback, genotyping/viral sequencing of cases and possible sources, reporting to authorities

For more information or consultation, contact HAIProgram@cdph.ca.gov or 510-412-6060  
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References

1 Refer to the Immunization Branch’s CDPH Acute Hepatitis B and C Public Health Investigation ‘Quicksheet’ for instructions on non-healthcare and healthcare-associated hepatitis investigation instructions: (https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/Immunization/AcuteHepatitisInvestigations-Quicksheet.pdf)


3 Refer to the CDC Guide for Investigating Healthcare-Associated Hepatitis for the full list of steps to take during an investigation: (http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/outbreaks/healthcareinvestigationguide.htm)

4 “Red Flags” for Suspecting Healthcare Acquisition of HBV or HCV

- Sentinel events, such as seroconversion in a dialysis patient or frequent blood donor
- Patient age ≥ 50 with acute HBV/HCV and no traditional risk factors
- Setting types where prior hepatitis outbreaks have occurred, for example:
  - Outpatient settings where frequent injections or infusions are administered (e.g., ambulatory surgery centers, oncology clinics, pain management clinics, long-term care settings, or outpatient dialysis centers)
  - Settings that provide assistance with multiple patients for blood glucose monitoring (e.g., long-term care facilities or assisted-living facilities)
- Facility or clinic associated with a prior case of acute HBV/HCV
- Previous report or complaint submitted about a healthcare provider or clinic regarding unsafe injection practice

Additional Resources

CDC infection control resources for outpatient settings include:
- Infection prevention guide and checklist for outpatient settings
- Outpatient policy options worksheet
- Basic infection control plan for outpatient oncology settings (http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/settings/outpatient/outpatient-settings.html)

CDC viral hepatitis healthcare-associated outbreaks resources include:
- Healthcare investigation checklist
- Healthcare investigation guide
- Healthcare investigation letter
- The healthcare notification testing toolkit (http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/outbreaks/index.htm)

CDC injection safety resources can be found at: (http://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/index.htm)

CDC blood glucose monitoring and insulin safety tips can be found at: (http://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/blood-glucose-monitoring.html)

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