

# EASY C FACTS



by Alan Franciscus

## Gay Men, Sex & HCV

Hepatitis C (Hep C for short) is spread by blood-to-blood contact. Getting HCV from sex does not happen very often, but it can happen especially if there is blood during sex.

In the past couple of years, there have been some news stories about higher rates of HCV sexual transmission among gay men and among men who have sex with men. The reasons for the higher transmission rates are not really clear, but it could

be due to rough or dry anal (ass) sex, fisting, having another sexually transmitted disease, or having sex with a lot of different people.

If you think you may have been exposed to Hep C ask your doctor to test you. Since Hep C and HIV are spread in similar ways, people with HIV should be tested for Hep C.

The good news is that if you are infected with Hep C there are many things you can do to stay healthy like eating well, exercising, avoiding alcohol, and taking HCV medications.

### *It is important to Remember...*

- ◆ Hep C is spread by blood-to-blood contact, but remember that blood can be present even if you can't see it
- ◆ Practice safer sex especially when blood is present or if you have many sex partners
- ◆ Do not share needles or works (cookers, cottons, water)
- ◆ Do not share toothbrushes or razorblades
- ◆ Cover open cuts or wounds

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