The Management of Hepatitis C in General Practice

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My clinic

- Inner city practice in Sydney
- Low socio-economic population
- Many people with HIV and/or hepatitis C
- Many homeless people
- Many people with drug problems
- Many people with mental health problems
- Many people with chronic illness

Facts & Figures - Transmission

- In Australia
 - 225,000 people with hepatitis C
 - Total population 20,000,000
- 16,000 new cases each year
- Injecting drug use is most common mode of transmission
- Perinatal transmission rare

Facts & Figures - Prognosis

- Majority of acute infections progress to chronic infection
- Majority of acute infections progress to chronic infection
- Risk of cirrhosis: 7% at 20 years, 20% at 40 years
- Hepatitis C related mortality: 1% at 20 years, 4% at 40 years
- Risk of hepatoma

Facts & Figures - Treatment

- Treatment usually with combination pegylated interferon and ribavirin
- 80% remission if genotype 2 or 3
- 35% remission if genotype 1
- Duration of therapy: 6-12 months
- End stage liver disease due to hepatitis C is most common reason for liver transplantation in Australia

Facts & Figures - Prevention

- Offer Hepatitis A and B vaccination to all patients with Hepatitis C
- Harm minimisation approach
- Education of public about risk
- Education about how to reduce transmission
- Needle syringe exchange programs

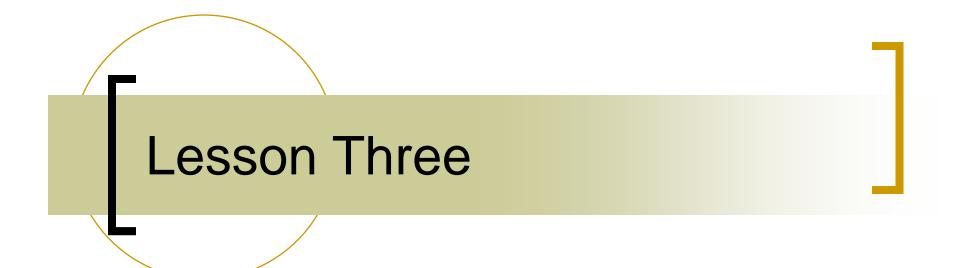
Ten Lessons for GPs

Lesson One

Hepatitis C is a primary care condition Much of the care can be provided through general practice



GPs play a key role in hepatitis C prevention through education of our patients



If you want to find out what's going on in at risk communities, ask a GP



Informed consent is important for all investigations



Do not let professional boundaries get in the way of delivering the best care for your community

Lesson Six

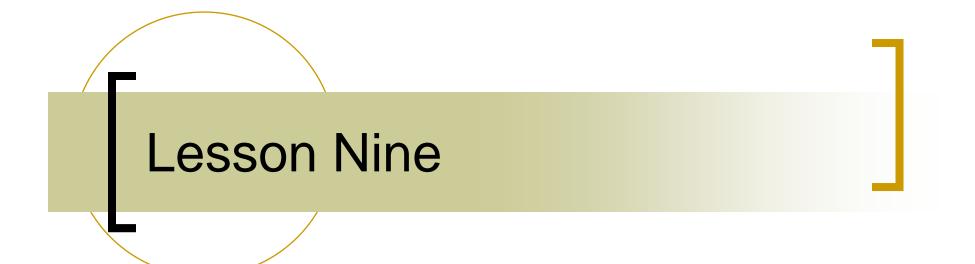
Continuity of care may be the single most important factor influencing adherence to therapies and ongoing management

Lesson Seven

People with hepatitis C can be strong advocates in the health consumer movement and can work with their doctors to lobby for improved access to care



"Could it be Hepatitis C?"



General Practice based psychological services work



Learn from your patients, and become a better doctor

