



STUDY FINDS FEMALE STREET-INVOLVED YOUTH ARE TWO TIMES MORE LIKELY THAN MALE YOUTH TO CONTRACT THE HEPATITIS C VIRUS

BACKGROUND & METHOD

- This study looked at hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection over a 6-year period among a group of street-involved youth in Vancouver.
- 512 street-involved youth who did not have HCV upon study enrollment were later tested for HCV at least one other time between 2005 and 2011.
- Each time youth were tested for HCV they were also asked about their drug use and other behaviours.

QUICK FACT

FEMALE STREET-INVOLVED YOUTH WERE MORE LIKELY TO CONTRACT HCV COMPARED TO MALE STREET-YOUTH.

FINDINGS

- Over the study period, among those 512 HCV-negative youth, 11% (56 individuals) later contracted HCV.
- Female youth were twice as likely to contract HCV.
- Youth who injected heroin or crystal methamphetamine were more likely to contract HCV.

IMPLICATIONS

- HCV prevention and addiction treatment programs need to tailor and customize their outreach and services to the unique situations and needs of young street-involved women.

Puri N, DeBeck K, Feng C, Kerr T, Rieb L, Wood E. **Gender influences on hepatitis C incidence among street youth in a Canadian setting.** *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 2014; 55(6): 830-834.

