

Canadian Government Asks

To reduce the health and social impact of hepatitis B and C on the liver health of Canadians, we ask federal, provincial and territorial governments to adopt a fully-funded, coordinated national strategy that by 2012:

Promotes prevention of hepatitis B and C through expanded education, immunization and harm reduction programs all across Canada.

- All provinces and territories should implement harmonized immunization programs, including universal neonatal hepatitis B vaccination and catch-up vaccination programs for those who have not received it.
- Aggressive steps should be taken to reduce the incidence of infection among at risk populations such as injection drug users, prison populations and youth.
- Aggressive, broad-based education and awareness campaigns need to be undertaken to encourage people who have chronic hepatitis but are asymptomatic to seek medical help.
- Strategies to prevent hepatitis B and C infection and maximize the dissemination and most effective use of potentially curative antiviral therapies are necessary to reduce the burden of the disease.
- Information about harm reduction needs to be disseminated.

Improves access to comprehensive care and treatment programs in all areas of the country.

- Health care must be accessible to all populations, including primary and specialty care, hospitalization and specialized procedures like transplantation.
- Canada lags behind other developed countries in funding necessary medications. Drug coverage must reflect current best practices as recommended by experts in the management of hepatitis B and C.
- Promotion of organ donor campaigns to make liver transplants as accessible as possible must be undertaken.

Increases knowledge and innovation through interdisciplinary research and surveillance to reduce the burden of hepatitis B and C on Canadians.

- There is a need for greater ongoing surveillance, testing, and understanding of the prevalence and incidence of these diseases.
- There needs to be substantially increased support for research into hepatitis B and C.

Creates awareness about risk factors, stigma and the need for testing among the general population and at-risk groups.

- Programs need to be established to identify hepatitis B and C infected individuals who are unaware of their infection and address the stigma which too often is associated with the disease.

Builds capacity through training and recruitment of qualified health professionals.

- New infrastructures are needed that focus on the education and development of healthcare professionals.
- Governments need to develop strategies to increase the number of practising hepatologists and hepatology nurses in Canada.

Supports communities and community-based groups in developing, delivering and evaluating peer-driven and focused initiatives.

- These programs must be accessible to at risk populations and marginalized groups across Canada.
- Governments must provide stable funding for long-term planning which are both essential to ensuring relevant and effective hepatitis programs.