

Hepatitis C, Acute

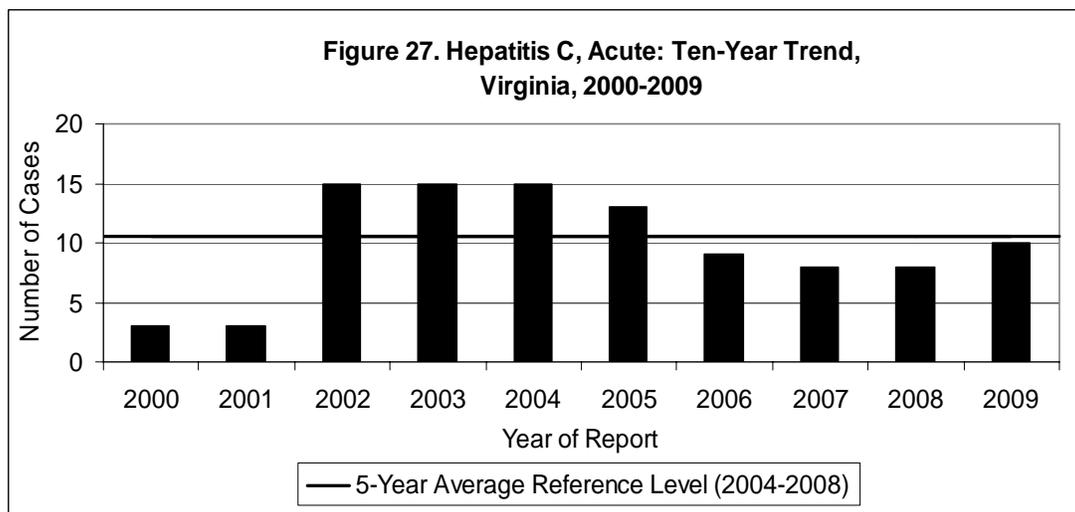
Agent: Hepatitis C virus (HCV) (Flaviviridae family)

Mode of Transmission: Person-to-person transmission through the skin, such as during injection drug use, or blood, such as transfusion of blood from unscreened donors; less commonly through perinatal exposure or sexual exposure to blood or body fluids.

Signs/Symptoms: Fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, abdominal discomfort, or jaundice.

Prevention: Preventive measures include screening of donated blood and organs and avoidance of injection drug use.

Other Important Information: Only 10% of new infections cause symptoms, but 80% of new infections become chronic, resulting in carriers capable of spreading infection. As people with chronic HCV infection age, they are at higher risk for developing chronic liver disease, cirrhosis, and liver cancer. A vaccine to prevent HCV is not available.



Ten cases of acute hepatitis C were reported in 2009 (Figure 27). This is comparable to the five-year average of 10.6 cases per year. Cases ranged in age from 22 to 47 years and the incidence rate was slightly higher in the 20-29 year age group (0.4 per 100,000), than the 30-39 and 40-49 year age groups (0.3 per 100,000, each) (Figure 28). All seven cases for which race information was available were white and this resulted in an incidence of 0.1 per 100,000 in that population. Females and males had similar incidence rates (0.2 and 0.1 per 100,000, respectively). The highest number of cases and the highest incidence rate occurred in the southwest region (4 cases, 0.3 per 100,000), followed by the central region (3 cases, 0.2 per 100,000). Illness onset occurred in the first quarter for three cases and the fourth quarter for two cases. The three remaining cases had illness onset before the 2009 report year. No deaths were identified among the ten acute hepatitis C cases reported in 2009.

