

## **Hepatitis C, Acute**

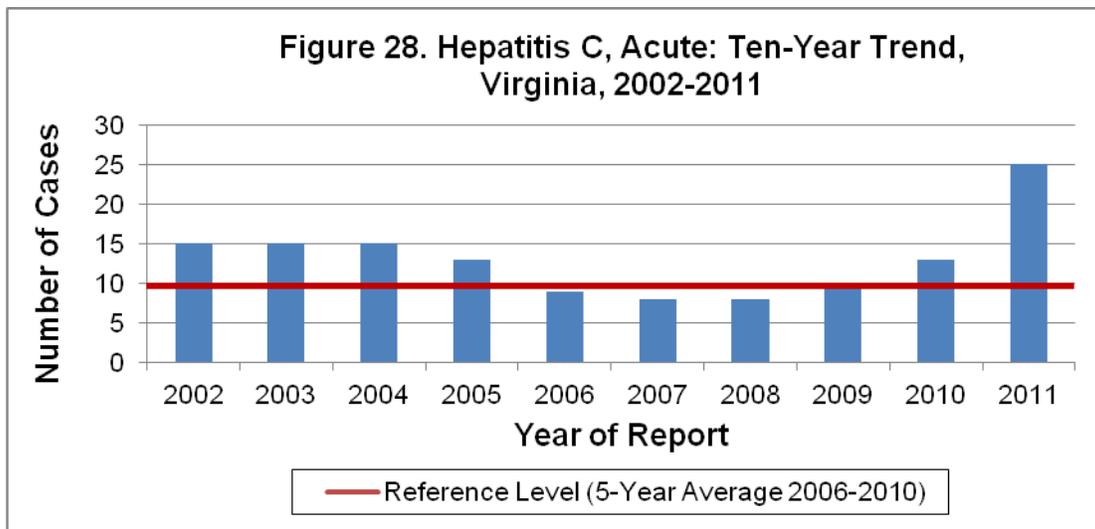
Agent: Hepatitis C virus (HCV); member of the Flavivirus family

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.

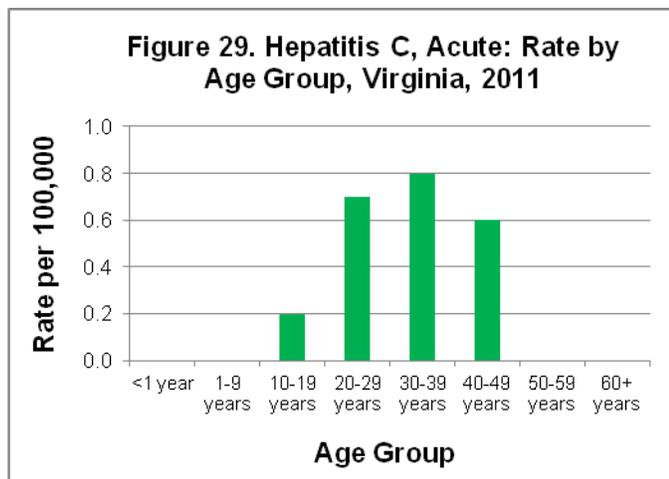
Signs/Symptoms: Fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, abdominal discomfort, or jaundice.

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

Other Important Information: Approximately 20-30% of new infections cause symptoms. HCV infections become chronic in 75-85% of cases. 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.



Twenty-five cases of acute hepatitis C infection were reported in 2011, which is 160% above the five-year average of 9.6 cases per year (Figure 28). Cases ranged in age from 16 to 48 years, and the incidence rate was highest in the 30-39 year age group (0.8 per 100,000) (Figure 29). Of the twenty cases for which race information was available, eighteen were reported from the white population (0.3 per 100,000), and two from the black population (0.1 per 100,000). Males and females had the same rate of infection (0.3 per 100,000, respectively).



By region, incidence rates were highest in the southwest (0.7 per 100,000), followed closely by the northwest region (0.6 per 100,000). Rates among the remaining regions ranged from 0.0 to 0.4 per 100,000. Disease onset occurred throughout the year with no distinct seasonal pattern. Risk factor data were available for five (20%) cases, with one case reporting more than one risk factor. Among the five cases, 3 had sexual contact with a known HCV-infected partner, 2 had injected non-prescribed drugs, and 1 case reported acquiring a tattoo. No deaths were identified among the 25 acute hepatitis C cases reported in 2011.