

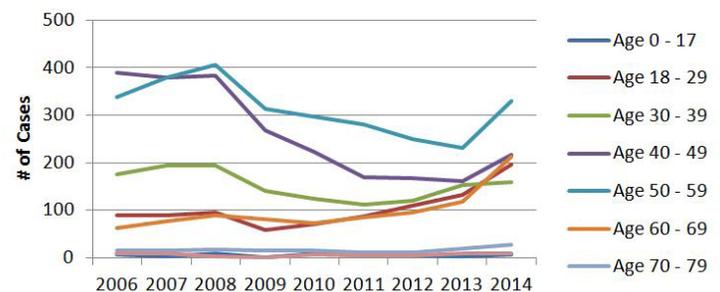
New Hepatitis C Effort in Pierce County

Levels of chronic and acute viral hepatitis C are on the rise. New treatments are available that can cure the majority of people treated. Nationally, it is estimated that only 50% of people who have hepatitis C have been screened and are aware. An even lower proportion have had confirmatory testing and are in care for hepatitis C.

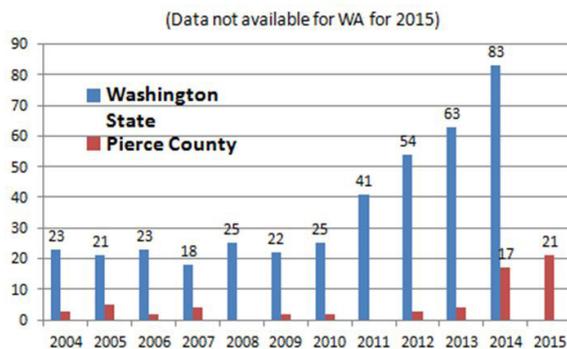
Increase in chronic cases identified:

The number of new reports of chronic hepatitis C is increasing. The sharp increase in cases among 50-70 year olds reflects a public health initiative for universal testing of the 1945-1965 birth cohort ("Baby Boomers"). The Centers for Disease Control and prevention recommended this approach in 2012. People in this birth cohort have likely been infected for many years. For them, hepatitis C treatment and cure can improve their health and life expectancy.

New Chronic HCV Reports 2006-2014, by Age Group Pierce County, WA



Acute HCV Cases, Washington State and Pierce County, 2004-2015



Increase in acute cases identified:

Acute hepatitis C cases are also increasing in Pierce County and Washington State. Especially concerning is the increase in new cases we are seeing in young people, age 18-29. Most of these young people have contracted hepatitis C through injection drug use. Because acute hepatitis C (new infections) usually have no symptoms, these infections usually go unreported. For every one acute infection reported, it is estimated that 20 go unreported.

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department Communicable Disease Program is expanding efforts to address the disease. Our goals for 2016 include:

- Improve our knowledge of hepatitis C in Pierce County by working with health care systems, laboratories, other public health partners and community stakeholders.
- Collect and organize hepatitis data and report our findings.
- Coordinate county-wide efforts to promote screening and linkage to care.
- Assess current capacity for hepatitis treatment in Pierce County.

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