



28 July 2014 - Did you know that the viral hepatitis kills 1.4 million people worldwide each year? That's as many people as HIV/AIDS. Worldwide 240 million people are infected with hepatitis B virus and 150 million people with hepatitis C virus.

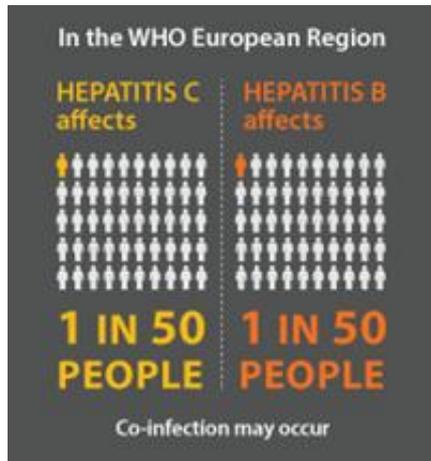
The United Nations today marks [World Hepatitis Day](#) for the fourth time to bring attention to the disease. All across the world, World Hepatitis Day is our chance to call for a change in attitude to viral hepatitis.

On World Hepatitis Day, 28 July 2014, [WHO](#) and partners urge policy-makers, health workers and the public to "think again" about this silent killer.

Viral hepatitis – a group of infectious diseases known as Hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E – affects hundreds of millions of people worldwide, causing acute and chronic liver disease and killing close to 1.4 million people every year.

Hepatitis A and E are typically caused by ingestion of contaminated food or water. Hepatitis B, C and D usually occur as a result of parenteral contact with infected body fluids. Common modes of transmission for these viruses include receipt of contaminated blood or blood products, invasive medical procedures using contaminated equipment and for hepatitis B

transmission from mother to baby at birth, from family member to child, and also by sexual contact



In April this year, WHO issued new recommendations on treatment of Hepatitis C. In May, World Health Assembly delegates from 194 governments adopted a resolution to improve prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of viral hepatitis.

Hepatitis B and C affect millions of people in the European Region. Data that has recently become available, shows that in the [WHO European Region](#), which comprises 53 countries, an estimated 13.3 million people live with chronic hepatitis B and an estimated 15 million people with hepatitis C. Two-thirds of infected persons in the Region live in Eastern Europe and central Asia. Hepatitis B causes about 36 000 deaths and hepatitis C about 86 000 deaths per year in WHO European Member States.

Hepatitis is one of the most prevalent and serious infectious conditions in the world, but many people - including health policy makers - remain unaware of its staggering toll on global health.

Follow the conversation in social media with [#thinkhepatitis](#) and [#WorldHepatitisDay](#)

Links:

[World Health Organization - WHO](#)

[World Hepatitis Alliance](#)

[World Hepatitis Day](#)

6 things to know about hepatitis:

# Think again - World Hepatitis Day calls for a change in attitude

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