



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Health District advises of an eighth acute hepatitis C case**  
*Seventh tied to Endoscopy Center of Southern Nevada*

**LAS VEGAS** – The Southern Nevada Health District has identified an additional case of acute hepatitis C in a patient who underwent a procedure at the Endoscopy Center of Southern Nevada, 700 Shadow Lane. This additional case brings the total number of acute hepatitis C cases associated with this outbreak to eight and it is the seventh linked directly to the clinic.

The eighth case underwent a procedure at the clinic in June 2005 and developed symptoms of acute hepatitis C nine weeks after the procedure. The patient had no other reported risk factors for the illness and has since recovered.

“Our investigation into this case will continue and we will continue to work to identify additional dates when disease transmission occurred. We believe that since this patient underwent a procedure in 2005, our investigation and notification of patients who visited the clinic as early as March 2004 appears well founded,” said Dr. Lawrence Sands, chief health officer.

The health district’s investigation is ongoing and it continues to receive more than 150 reports of positive hepatitis C cases daily. Typically, the health district receives 20 to 40 positive reports daily. The higher numbers are expected based on increased rates of testing and the background rate of the disease.

Interviews of patients of the Endoscopy Center of Southern Nevada who have tested positive for hepatitis C have begun. Patients who had procedures requiring injected anesthesia at the center in January will have to wait six months from their procedure date to be tested and therefore the interview process will take several months to complete.

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Health District advised of eighth acute case – add one

Considerations of the investigation include:

- The patient list received by the health district was incomplete and part of the interview process will include identifying patients who had procedures at the endoscopy center.
- Approximately 4 percent of the clinic population would have been previously infected with hepatitis C and laboratory testing cannot distinguish between recent and older infections.
- Because many of the newly reported infections may have been acquired years previously it may not be possible to determine the source of the infection.
- The evaluation of acute hepatitis C infections involves examining a patient's risk for six months prior to the onset of symptoms. The evaluation of chronic hepatitis C infections involves examining a patient's risk over the course of their lives.
- The health district routinely investigates acute hepatitis B and HIV cases, however, the risk of acquiring either of these two infections is thought to be much lower for persons possibly exposed at the clinic.
- A set of criteria has been developed for evaluation of significant risk factors in order to classify cases based on their likelihood of exposure at the clinic.

"It is important to note that this is an ongoing investigation that will take some time to complete," said Sands. "I am encouraged that people are getting tested and patients who are concerned about procedures at other clinics should discuss their need for testing with their personal physician."

In March, the Southern Nevada Health District reported that it identified an acute case of hepatitis C in a patient who received a procedure at the Desert Shadow Endoscopy Center at 4275 Burnham Avenue in Las Vegas. The health district is continuing its investigation of this case and will determine its next steps based on that investigation. This seventh identified case was diagnosed in 2006, but never reported to the health district.

The Southern Nevada Health District continues to update information on its website, including patient and physician information at [www.SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict.org](http://www.SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict.org). In addition, the health district has set up a hotline at (702) 759-4636 (INFO).