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Hepatitis C, Acute  
2000 Case Definition  
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NOTE:  
A surveillance case definition is a set of uniform criteria used to define a disease for public health surveillance. Surveillance case definitions enable public health officials to classify and count cases consistently across reporting jurisdictions. Surveillance case definitions are not intended to be used by healthcare providers for making a clinical diagnosis or determining how to meet an individual patient’s health needs.  
Clinical Description  
An acute illness with a) discrete onset of symptoms (such as nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhea) and b) jaundice or abnormal serum aminotransferase (ALT) levels  
Laboratory Criteria For Diagnosis  
Serum ALT levels greater than 7 times the upper limit of normal,  
AND  
Immunoglobulin M (IgM) antibody to hepatitis A virus (IgM anti-HAV) negative (if done),  
AND  
IgM antibody to hepatitis B core antigen (IgM anti-HBc) negative, or if not done, hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) negative,  
AND  
Antibody to hepatitis C virus (anti-HCV) positive, verified by an additional more specific assay.  
Case Classification  
Confirmed  
A case that meets the clinical case definition and is laboratory confirmed  
Comments  
Persons who have chronic hepatitis or persons identified as anti-HCV positive should not be reported as having acute viral hepatitis unless they have evidence of an acute illness compatible with viral hepatitis.  
Up to 20% of acute hepatitis C cases will be anti-HCV negative when reported and will be classified as non-A, non-B hepatitis because some (5%-10%) have not yet seroconverted and others (5%-10%) remain negative even with prolonged follow-up.  
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Available serologic tests for anti-HCV do not distinguish between acute and chronic or past infection. Thus, other causes of acute hepatitis should be excluded for anti-HCV positive patients who have an acute illness compatible with viral hepatitis.  
References  
Kuo G, Choo Q-L, Alter HJ, Gitnick GL, Redeker AG, Purcell RH, Miyamura T, Dienstag JL, Alter MJ, Stevens CE, et al. An Assay for Cirulating Antibodies to a Major Etiologic Virus of Human Non-A, Non-B Hepatitis. Science 1989;244(4902):362-4  
Related Case Definition(s)  
Hepatitis C, Acute | 2020 Case Definition  
Hepatitis C, Acute | 2016 Case Definition  
Hepatitis C, Acute | 2012 Case Definition  
Hepatitis C, Acute | 2011 Case Definition  
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NNDSS receives and shares case data from state, local, and territorial health departments to help public health monitor, control, and prevent serious diseases.  
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