



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Earl Ray Tomblin
Governor

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Karen L. Bowling
Cabinet Secretary

March 11, 2016

Dear Doctor:

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health, Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services, Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology (DIDE) and the Beckley-Raleigh County Health Department, with the assistance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are investigating possible healthcare-associated viral hepatitis infections among patients who underwent TC99m sestamibi (Cardiolite™) stress testing (myocardial perfusion imaging) at the Raleigh Heart Clinic in Beckley, West Virginia. Two clusters of hepatitis C (involving eight patients receiving cardiac stress tests at the clinic on three different days) and two possible clusters of hepatitis B (involving four patients receiving cardiac stress tests on two different days) were identified.

The stress test required several injections through an intravenous catheter. Observations of cardiac stress test procedures at the clinic did not identify a clear mechanism that would explain how transmission occurred. Additional information on healthcare-associated outbreaks of hepatitis can be found at www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/.

The extent of possible exposure to bloodborne pathogens is unknown, so out of an abundance of caution, patients who underwent stress testing at the Raleigh Heart Clinic between March 1, 2012 through March 27, 2015 are being notified by mail of the potential exposure and the recommendation for hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and HIV testing. Patients were advised to bring this letter to their own providers for guidance and testing.

Testing may be available through the Raleigh Heart Clinic, the individual's personal healthcare provider or the local health department (LHD). The list can be found at www.dhhr.wv.gov/localhealth/pages/map.aspx. Additional information and resources are enclosed. Should you have any questions, please contact us at 1 (800) 642-8244. Testing through the LHD will be available from March 1, 2016 until July 1, 2016.

The West Virginia Bureau for Public Health, LHD, Raleigh Heart Clinic, and the CDC are all committed to the investigation and are trying to ensure no additional patients will be infected through healthcare exposures. We appreciate your understanding and your care for patients from the Raleigh Heart Clinic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rahul Gupta".

Rahul Gupta, MD, MPH, FACP
Commissioner and State Health Officer

Attachment

Guidelines for the Initial Visit:

Testing is recommended for a patient who:

- is a Raleigh Heart Clinic (RHC) patient, AND
- received injections at the RHC, AND
- injection occurred between March 1, 2012 through March 27, 2015.

If the patient is NOT a RHC patient, he/she is not at risk. If the patient did not receive an injection from RHC, he/she is not at risk.

Explain that the purpose of testing is to test for infections with hepatitis B, hepatitis C or HIV and that treatment options are available for all three viruses. Recommended tests are:

1. Hepatitis B surface antigen
2. Hepatitis C antibody with reflex to HCV nucleic acid testing (NAT) if positive
3. Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) using a fourth generation immunoassay

Remind the patient that more information is available at www.dide.wv.gov or by calling 1 (800) 642-8244.

Negative Results:

1. Explain that no evidence of infection with hepatitis B, hepatitis C or HIV was detected and that a person is not currently infected.
2. Answer any questions and reiterate the resources available if they have further questions:
 - a. www.dide.wv.gov
 - b. Hotline: 1 (800) 642-8244
 - c. Other locally available resources to counsel about any potential risks for viral hepatitis or HIV

Positive Results:

1. Determine the need for any additional testing.
 - a. A positive hepatitis C antibody should always be confirmed with an HCV RNA test.
 - b. Patients may need an explanation of resolved HCV infection (positive hepatitis C antibodies with negative HCV NAT test) and should be reassured that they cannot transmit the virus to others.
2. Explain the results to the patient and what next steps are recommended, including evaluation and/or referral for possible treatment links to treatment resources.
3. Offer information about the disease(s), including how the disease(s) can be transmitted. Explain how to prevent transmission to others, including HBV vaccine if indicated. Links to patient information sheets are found at www.dide.wv.gov.

4. Answer any questions and reiterate the resources available if they have further questions:
 - a. www.dide.wv.gov
 - b. Hotline: 1 (800) 642-8244
 - c. Other locally available resources to counsel about any potential risks for hepatitis or HIV
5. Report positive results of hepatitis B, C, and HIV to the local health department in the county that the patient resides and notify your patient that positive results are reported to the local health department in accordance with state law.
6. It is possible to identify cases of all three viruses that might not be linked to the cardiology clinic. A positive test result in a RHC patient does not necessarily mean that the infection was acquired at RHC.