

Testing Recommendations for Children Born to Hepatitis C Virus-Positive Mothers

If Child is:	Order the Following Test(s):
2 Months of Age–18 Months of Age	Hepatitis C Virus RNA
18 Months of Age and Older	Hepatitis C Virus Antibody and, if positive, Hepatitis C Virus RNA

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are infants not tested with hepatitis C virus antibody prior to 18 months of age?

- Hepatitis C virus antibody testing before 18 months of age is not recommended as a positive result could likely reflect maternal hepatitis C virus antibodies

Is there a risk that a hepatitis C virus-positive mother will vertically transmit hepatitis C virus to her infant during pregnancy?

- A mother must be viremic (hepatitis C virus RNA-positive) during pregnancy in order to transmit hepatitis C virus to her infant
- The overall risk of a hepatitis C virus-positive mother transmitting hepatitis C virus to her infant is approximately 6% with each pregnancy
- Transmission occurs at the time of birth, and no intrapartum or newborn prophylaxis is available
- Most infants with hepatitis C virus show few or no signs of being sick, but if untreated, hepatitis C virus can lead to serious liver damage
- Treatment for hepatitis C virus is now available for children 3 years of age and older

What is reportable to the Tennessee Department of Health?

- Laboratories must report hepatitis C virus antibody tests (positive) and RNA results (both positive and negative) to the Tennessee Department of Health:
 - https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/reportable-diseases/2021_Detailed_Laboratory_Guidance_Final.pdf
- Providers must report cases of perinatal hepatitis C virus or cases of acute hepatitis C virus to the Tennessee Department of Health:
 - <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/reportable-diseases/Provider-list-2021.pdf>