

Poster presentation

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Factors associated with HIV and hepatitis C infection among regular and non-regular injection drug users in Baltimore

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Background

This study explores the association of length of time (short or long term) of regular injection drug use, time to regular injection drug use after first use, and demographic factors with HIV and hepatitis C (HCV) infection prevalence.

Materials and methods

Data on 410 injection drug users (IDU) were from the International Neurobehavioral HIV Study, an epidemiological examination of neuropsychological, social, and behavioral risk factors of HIV and hepatitis A, B and C.

Results

Long term IDUs were more likely to be infected with HCV (OR = 2.61) or HIV (OR = 2.60) compared to short term injectors. Those who became regular injectors the first week (OR = 3.44), a week to 6 months (OR = 3.92), or more than 6 months (OR = 3.00) after first use were more likely to be infected with HCV than those who never became regular users. Time to regular injection drug use was not associated with HIV infection.

Conclusion

Extant studies suggest drug users at HIV risk have an even greater risk of contracting HCV. Our study findings suggest that identifying injectors who progress from initiation to regular use rapidly are at heightened HCV risk and may benefit from targeted prevention interventions.