

# HEPATITIS HEALTH



Governor Charlie Crist



## LIVER AWARENESS MONTH

October is being recognized across the nation as *Liver Awareness Month*. In Florida, **Governor Charlie Crist** has issued a proclamation in honor of this observance. (See page 8.) Over 25 million Americans, or one in every 10, are affected by some form of liver disease. The goal of *Liver Awareness Month* is to educate people on the function of the liver and to explain health problems associated with the liver.

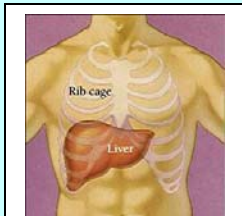
“The liver plays an important role in filtering substances we ingest into our bodies, including aiding in digestion, changing food into energy, removing toxins and regulating chemicals in the blood,” **State Surgeon General Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.** said. “Because the liver is vital to sustaining life, Floridians should educate themselves on the preventative aspects of liver disease.”



State Surgeon General  
Dr. Viamonte Ros

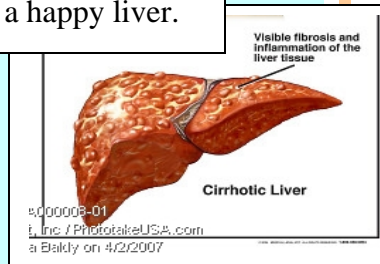
The liver is the largest internal organ, weighing about three pounds, and the only organ that can regenerate itself. Some of the most frequently diagnosed liver diseases are hepatitis, cirrhosis, and fatty liver. Hepatitis is characterized by inflammation of the liver. Hepatitis A, B, and C are the most common types of viral hepatitis in the United States.

The Department of Health’s (DOH) Hepatitis Prevention Program and local county health departments promote awareness activities, including free hepatitis A and B vaccines and hepatitis B and C laboratory testing for adults at increased risk of infection.



That’s a mighty fine looking liver!

This is not a happy liver.



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### Name that tune!

“Don't let the past remind us of what we are not now.”

Answer on page 10

## Regional Hepatitis Coordinators Meet in DC

Hepatitis Foundation International (HFI), headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, hosted the Atlantic Regional Hepatitis Coordinator’s meeting in Washington, DC, on September 17 and 18, 2007. **Phil Reichert**, Program Administrator for the Florida Hepatitis Prevention Program, attended. According to Reichert, this meeting provided an opportunity for several state hepatitis programs, plus programs from Philadelphia and Washington, DC, to “share best practices and offer advice for enhancing hepatitis prevention services in the public health sector.”

Several states were represented at this meeting from along the eastern seaboard of the US. **Corinna Dan**, from HFI, facilitated the meeting. Each state and city coordinator had the opportunity to provide an overview of their hepatitis program. Many states have little or no funding to provide hepatitis A and B vaccine or to do testing. Florida has been fortunate to have received funding for these activities since 1999.

Several hepatitis program coordinators stated that they have received occasional one-time funding to provide limited vaccine or testing. Most explained that they provide training, educational materials and other information about hepatitis to individuals at risk in the public health sector. Most state hepatitis programs were integrated into HIV and STD programs in their states. A common problem was finding people newly diagnosed with hepatitis C but not being able to link them to care.

**Tony Falvo**, formerly of the Florida Department of Health, Bureau of HIV/AIDS, and now working for Orasure Technologies, Inc., in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, provided the group information on new testing technology regarding hepatitis C. He stated that Orasure Technologies has developed a point-of-care rapid test for hepatitis C. The company plans to submit it for FDA approval early in 2008. They hope to have the rapid test available by the end of 2008.

A SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) presentation stated that when specific outreach and enhanced counseling are done to remind people at risk to complete the hepatitis B vaccine series, there was a 61% completion rate versus a 27% completion rate without the counseling. This is based on a study the SAMHSA funded from November 2005 through March 2007.



**Editor’s Note:** HFI is a national training and advocacy organization. You can reach them at 1-800-891-0707.

Phil Reichert is in the front row standing next to Corinna Dan (holding a red jacket.) Chris Taylor from NASTAD is to the right, behind Phil.



### About the American Liver Foundation

The American Liver Foundation (ALF) is the nation's leading nonprofit organization promoting liver health, and disease prevention. ALF provides research, education, and advocacy for those affected by liver-related diseases including hepatitis.

## RICK SMITH JOINS THE AMERICAN LIVER FOUNDATION AS PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The American Liver Foundation is pleased to announce that **Rick Smith**, a leader in the nonprofit world who has extensive experience running prominent national health organizations, will be joining the Foundation as its next President and Chief Executive Officer, effective November 5th. Mr. Smith will succeed interim CEO **John W. Corwin**.

Since 1987, Mr. Smith has held a series of leadership positions at the National Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society, working at both the national and chapter levels. He served as Vice President for the Western United States for ten years, followed by two years as Arizona Chapter President. For the past eight years, Mr. Smith was President and CEO of the Maryland Chapter. Prior to joining the MS Society, he served as CEO of the Southern California Affiliate of the American Diabetes Association.

During his tenure as President of the Maryland Chapter of the MS Society, the organization was able to double its revenue and vastly increase its commitment to funding research and helping the 6,500 Maryland residents with multiple sclerosis to manage their lives.

## HEPATITIS 101

The Hepatitis Prevention Program provides a Hepatitis 101 teleconference four times a year. This training is available for all healthcare providers in the state of Florida, with nurses receiving one contact hour of continuing education.

The thing that everyone likes most about this basic, introductory course is the convenience. You register online and take a pre-test. Two weeks prior to the course, you'll receive the PowerPoint presentation, along with a toll-free phone number.

Individuals can just sit in front of their computer and participate in the class. Or, larger groups like to assemble in a conference room with the PowerPoint being shown on a big screen. Either way, it's an easy, convenient way to learn about hepatitis A, B, and C. To register for Hepatitis 101, go to the following:

[http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease\\_ctrl/aids/hep/Hep101/101regform.htm](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/aids/hep/Hep101/101regform.htm)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE BUREAU OF HIV/AIDS

Congratulations to **Tom Liberti**, Bureau Chief for HIV/AIDS, who has been designated as the Chair-Elect for the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD). According to **Russell W. Eggert**, MD, MPH, Director, Division of Disease Control, "This is certainly a prestigious position and honor for Tom and brings great credit upon the bureau, its staff, and our division."



Tom Liberti



Ernesto J. Lamadrid

A big welcome to **Ernesto J. Lamadrid**, M.D., AAHIVS, the new Medical Director of the Bureau of HIV/AIDS. Dr. Lamadrid started his career in HIV/AIDS care as the Medical Director in several prisons for the Florida Department of Corrections (DC) where he provided HIV care to male and female inmates from 1994 to 2006. While at DC, he also served as Regional Medical Director for Central Florida for 18 months.

Before accepting his current position with the bureau, Dr. Lamadrid was the director of HIV/AIDS service for Alachua County Health Department.

Dr. Lamadrid is certified by the American Academy of HIV Medicine, a faculty member of the Florida AIDS Education and Training Center and has spoken at several national conferences on HIV care.

### Study Suggests Treating Hep C Before HIV

More evidence has arrived suggesting that treating [hepatitis C](#) (HCV) before HIV is a good idea, when possible. As reported in the [Journal of Infectious Diseases](#), researchers have found that people co-infected with HIV and HCV had fewer side effects to their HIV medicines if they are successfully treated for HCV first.

In the study of 132 co-infected patients in Spain, researchers first attempted to treat participants' HCV with standard interferon-based therapy. Treatment success was defined as having undetectable HCV levels for at least six months following the end of the treatment, and 33 percent of those treated achieved this goal. Researchers then initiated HIV treatment in all study participants. Those who'd been successfully treated for HCV had far less [liver toxicity](#) from their HIV drugs than those who'd not been successfully treated for HCV prior to commencing treatment.

[http://www.poz.com/articles/hiv\\_treatment\\_hepatitis\\_761\\_12980.shtml](http://www.poz.com/articles/hiv_treatment_hepatitis_761_12980.shtml)

## Checklist for Safe Vaccine Handling and Storage

Here are the 20 most important things you can do to safeguard your vaccine supply. Are you doing them all? Reviewing this list can help you improve your clinic's vaccine management practices.

- | <b>Yes</b>               | <b>No</b>                |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. We have a designated person in charge of the handling and storage of our vaccines.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. We have a back-up person in charge of the handling and storage of our vaccines.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. A vaccine inventory log is maintained that documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vaccine name and number of doses received</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Date the vaccine was received</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arrival condition of vaccine</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vaccine manufacturer and lot number</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vaccine expiration date</li> </ul>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Our refrigerator for vaccines is either household-style or commercial-style, NOT dormitory-style. The freezer compartment has a separate exterior door.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. We do NOT store any food or drink in the refrigerator or freezer.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. We store vaccines in the middle of the refrigerator or freezer, and NOT in the door.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. We stock and rotate our vaccine supply so that the newest vaccine of each type (with the longest expiration date) is placed behind the vaccine with the shortest expiration date.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. We check vaccine expiration dates and we first use those that will expire soonest.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. We post a sign on the refrigerator door showing which vaccines should be stored in the refrigerator and which should be stored in the freezer.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. We always keep a thermometer in the refrigerator.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. The temperature in the refrigerator is maintained at 35–46°F (2–8°C).   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. We keep extra containers of water in the refrigerator to help maintain cold temperatures.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. We always keep a thermometer in the freezer.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. The temperature in the freezer is maintained at +5°F (-15°C) or colder.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15. We keep ice packs and other ice-filled containers in the freezer to help maintain cold temperatures.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16. We post a temperature log on the refrigerator door on which we record the refrigerator and freezer temperatures twice a day—first thing in the morning and at clinic closing time—and we know whom to call if the temperature goes out of range.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 17. We have a “Do Not Unplug” sign next to the refrigerator’s electrical outlet.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 18. In the event of a refrigerator failure, we take the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We assure that the vaccines are placed in a location with adequate refrigeration.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We mark exposed vaccines and separate them from undamaged vaccines.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We note the refrigerator or freezer temperature and contact the vaccine manufacturer or state health department to determine how to handle the affected vaccines.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We follow the vaccine manufacturer’s or health department’s instructions as to whether the affected vaccines can be used, and, if so, we mark the vials with the revised expiration date provided by the manufacturer or health department.</li> </ul> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 19. We have obtained a detailed written policy for general and emergency vaccine management from our local or state health department.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 20. If all above answers are “yes,” we are patting ourselves on the back. If not, we have assigned someone to implement needed changes!   |

Technical content reviewed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dec. 2006.

www.immunize.org/catg.d/p3035chk.pdf • Item #P3035 (12/06)

Immunization Action Coalition • 1573 Selby Ave. • St. Paul, MN 55104 • (651) 647-9009 • www.immunize.org • www.vaccineinformation.org

*easy* **C** *facts*  
*Hepatitis C Support Project*  
*www.hcvadvocate.org*

The amazing thing about the liver is that it can repair itself even when it is infected by hepatitis C. But after a long time (usually 10-40 years) the liver can become so damaged that it can't heal itself completely. Cirrhosis means that the liver has become so damaged and scarred that it just can't function very well.

There are two types of cirrhosis:

**Compensated** cirrhosis means that the liver has a lot of scarring but can still perform many important functions.

**Decompensated** cirrhosis means that the liver is so scarred that it can't perform many of the things that keep you healthy.



**Scarring of the liver can be caused by many things, such as alcohol, drugs and diseases like hepatitis C.**



**It is important to remember:**



- ◆ When your liver develops *compensated* cirrhosis you may not even have any symptoms that your liver is damaged. This is why it is so important to get good medical care to keep you healthy. This may include taking HCV medications to treat your hepatitis C.
- ◆ When you have **decompensated** cirrhosis the liver becomes so damaged you will develop many symptoms and warning signs. When the liver becomes this damaged, you can not take medications to treat hepatitis C. At this point, it is very important that you receive regular check-ups with your doctor to keep an eye on you more closely and to treat you for some of the symptoms.

Version 1.0 July 2004

## BABY BOOMER SONGS

**Bobby Darin**--- Splish, Splash, I Was Havin' a Flash

**Roberta Flack**--- The First Time Ever I Forgot  
Your Face

**Johnny Nash**--- I Can't See Clearly Now

**Paul Simon**--- Fifty Ways to Lose Your Liver

**The Commodores**--- Once, Twice, Three Times  
to the Bathroom

**Marvin Gaye**--- Heard It Through the Grape Nuts

**Procol Harum**--- A Whiter Shade of Hair

**Leo Sayer**--- You Make Me Feel Like  
Napping

**The Temptations**--- Papa's Got a Kidney  
Stone

**Abba**--- Denture Queen

**Tony Orlando & Dawn**--- Knock 3 Times on the  
Ceiling if You Hear Me Fall

**Helen Reddy**--- I Am Woman, Hear Me Snore

**Leslie Gore**--- It's My Procedure, and I'll Cry if I Want To

**Willie Nelson**--- On the Commode Again



## ASIAN LIVER CENTER OPERATES INFORMATION HELP LINE

The Asian Liver Center (ALC) at Stanford University offers many services for Asian and Pacific Islander communities and individuals. One such service is an information help line in English, Mandarin, and Cantonese. To call toll free, dial (888) 311-3331.

To visit the ALC website, which features hepatitis B educational materials in multiple languages, go to: <http://liver.stanford.edu>



**CHARLIE CRIST**  
GOVERNOR

**LIVER AWARENESS MONTH**

WHEREAS, October is National Liver Awareness month; and

WHEREAS, some of the most frequently diagnosed liver diseases are hepatitis, cirrhosis, and fatty liver; and

WHEREAS, hepatitis is characterized by inflammation of the liver; and

WHEREAS, hepatitis A, B, and C are the most common types of viral hepatitis in the United States; and

WHEREAS, over 300,000 Floridians are currently infected with hepatitis C; and

WHEREAS, if left undetected, hepatitis C can lead to cirrhosis, liver cancer or liver failure; and

WHEREAS, cirrhosis caused by hepatitis C is the most common reason for liver transplantation; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Department of Health's Hepatitis Prevention Program offers free hepatitis testing and vaccination for adults at increased risk for infection;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Charlie Crist, Governor of the State of Florida, do hereby extend greetings and best wishes to all observing October 2007 as *Liver Awareness Month*.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, the Capital, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of September, in the year two thousand seven.



  
Governor

THE CAPITOL  
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399 • (850) 488-2272 • FAX (850) 922-4292

# easy C facts

Hepatitis C Support Project  
www.hcvadvocate.org

A liver biopsy is the best way to find out if your liver is healthy or damaged. It is also the best way for your doctor to know whether you have other complications, such as other types of hepatitis or liver conditions.

During a liver biopsy, a needle will be put into your liver and a small sample of tissue taken. Try not to worry too much because most people only have mild to moderate pain. If you are nervous about the test ask your doctor for some medication to help you relax. The liver biopsy is done while you are awake. Sometimes, an *ultrasound* is also performed to take a picture of the liver. This will help to decide exactly where to put the needle for the biopsy.

## Liver Biopsy

*The most important role of the liver biopsy is to know the health of the liver*



VERSION 1.0 • April 2004

### Some Cautions:

- About half of individuals have no pain afterwards, while another half will experience brief pain that may spread to the right shoulder.
- A few people, however, have to be hospitalized afterwards due to the pain or from accidentally hitting another organ during the test.
- Patients are checked for several hours after a biopsy to make sure serious bleeding has not occurred.
- Your doctor will advise you what to do before and after the test.
- A friend or a member of the family will have to take you to and from where you have the biopsy done.

### WE GOOFED!

In our Summer Issue of *Hepatitis Health*, we incorrectly stated that Bee Spears, bass player for Willie Nelson, has HCV. **Bee Spears** does NOT have Hep C, never did. His wife, Julia, was diagnosed with hepatitis C in 2001 and created the **Julia Spears Foundation**. Check out the website at: <http://helpwithhepc.org>

Julia Spears



### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

*Hepatitis Health* is brought to you by the Hepatitis Prevention Program in the Division of Disease Control, Bureau of HIV/AIDS at the Florida Department of Health. We want to know what you are doing in your community to prevent viral hepatitis. Please submit your articles and photos to:

[April.Crowley@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:April.Crowley@doh.state.fl.us)



<http://www.healsofthesouth.org/>

### Not all who wander are lost -JRR Tolkien

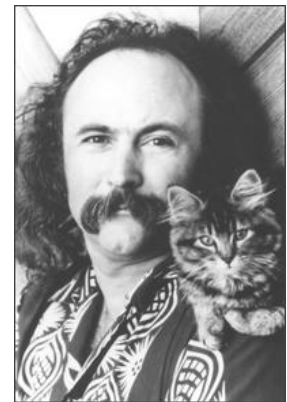
#### \*\* Answer to Trivia Question from page 1 \*\*

**Suite: Judy Blue Eyes** by Crosby, Stills and Nash, from the 1969 album "Crosby, Stills and Nash."

**Stephen Stills** wrote this song about his then girlfriend, folk singer, **Judy Collins**.

On another note, sixties songbird and reformed party animal **David Crosby** discovered he had hepatitis C when he was in end-stage liver failure. He got a liver transplant in 1994.

Crosby, Stills & Nash



Crosby and his puddy tat in younger days.