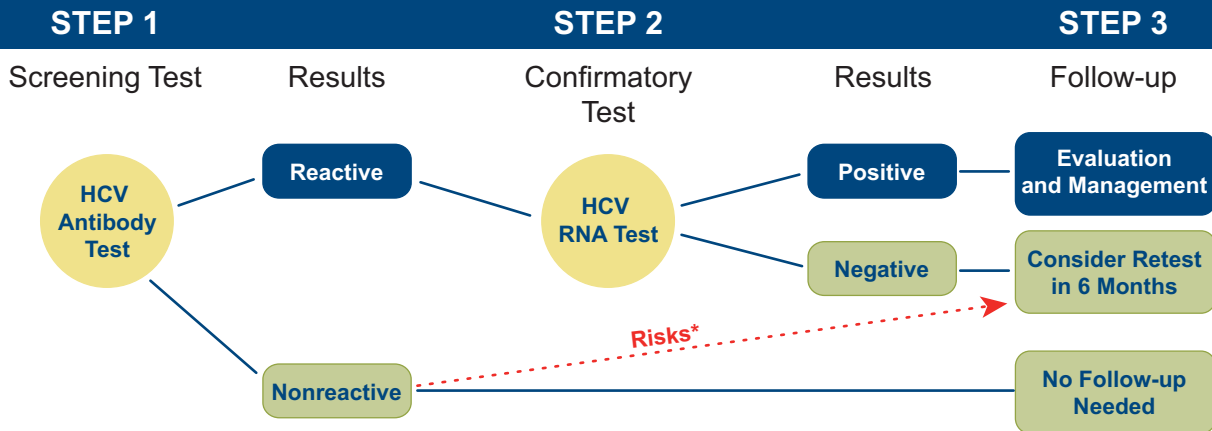


Understanding Your HCV RNA Test Results



*Retest if the person has engaged in risky behavior within 6 months or if risky behavior occurs.

POSITIVE

Explain results clearly and simply.

"The HCV RNA test result is positive, which means you are infected with the hepatitis C virus."

Assess patient reactions.

"How do you feel about knowing you have hepatitis C?
What does this result mean to you?"

Provide encouragement and respond to patient concerns.

"Hepatitis C is very serious, but it does not have to be life-threatening. You can do many things to protect your liver."

Provide education on liver health.

"To protect your liver health, it is very important that you:

- Get vaccinated against hepatitis A and B.
- Do not use alcohol.
- Check with your provider before taking prescription or over-the-counter medications.
- Learn your HIV status."

NEGATIVE

Explain results clearly and simply.

"Your HCV RNA test result was negative. That means you do not have hepatitis C virus (clarify risk factors*)."

Emphasize the need for re-testing.

"There is a chance you spontaneously cleared the virus, but I recommend you get re-tested in 6 months to confirm."

Discuss precautions to avoid infection.

"You should take precautions to avoid infection. If you inject drugs, avoid sharing any drug equipment ('works'). This includes cookers, cotton, water, needles, syringes, pipes, and straws."

Provide education on preventative liver health.

"To protect your liver health, it is very important that you:

- Get vaccinated against hepatitis A and B.
- Learn your HIV status."

*HCV RISK FACTORS INCLUDE:

- Born between 1945 and 1964 (baby boomer)
- Blood transfusion before 1992
- Veteran
- Shared a needle or stuck with unclean needle
- Unprotected sex with multiple partners
- Born to a mother with hepatitis C
- Shared a razor or toothbrush
- Tattoos or body piercing
- Manicures and pedicures (if instruments are not disinfected)