



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Earl Ray Tomblin
Governor

Commissioner's Office
350 Capitol Street, Room 702
Charleston, West Virginia 25301-3712
Telephone: (304) 558-2971 Fax: (304) 558-1035

Karen L. Bowling
Cabinet Secretary

March 11, 2016

Dear Patient:

An investigation of several cases of viral hepatitis that appear to be associated with cardiac stress tests performed at the Raleigh Heart Clinic in Beckley, West Virginia is being conducted by 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). Two groups of hepatitis C infections (affecting eight patients receiving cardiac stress tests on three different days) and two groups of hepatitis B infections (affecting four patients receiving cardiac stress tests on two different days) have been identified among patients who had injectable medications administered during their stress tests at the clinic.

The local health departments (LHDs) of West Virginia are committed to protecting the public's health, so it is important that we contact patients from this clinic. You have been identified in clinic records as a patient who has had a stress test at Raleigh Heart Clinic in Beckley, West Virginia between March 1, 2012 through March 27, 2015.

As a precaution, we recommend that you get tested for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) through the Raleigh Heart Clinic or your healthcare provider.

Observations of the clinic's practices did not identify a clear mechanism that could explain hepatitis B or C transmission; however, we are concerned that there is a possibility that you could have been exposed to a virus through injectable medications received at the clinic during your cardiac stress test. All of these viruses can be spread by exposure to blood or injectable medications contaminated with blood from an infected person.

Testing may be available through the Raleigh Heart Clinic, your healthcare provider, or the LHD. Please contact your LHD to schedule the blood draw and testing; the list can be found at: www.dhhr.wv.gov/localhealth/pages/map.aspx. Please bring a copy of this letter to the staff performing your blood tests. Testing through the LHD will be available from March 1, 2016 until July 1, 2016.

Please be aware that people infected with hepatitis C, hepatitis B, and HIV may not have symptoms for many years, so it is important to get tested even if you do not feel ill. Also keep in mind that we may find people who are infected with these viruses but whose infection is not related to the clinic. Unfortunately, many people do not know they are infected. Given the

March 11, 2016
Page Two

recommended time period for potential exposure, it may not be possible to determine when, where or how a patient became infected.

We understand this letter may raise questions for you. We have included links to hepatitis C, hepatitis B, and HIV web pages on frequently asked questions (FAQ). We have also established an information line at 1 (800) 642-8244, which will be available to answer your questions between 9:00am – 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. You and your healthcare provider may also get additional information at www.dide.wv.gov.

The West Virginia Bureau for Public Health, LHD, Raleigh Heart Clinic, and CDC are all committed to this investigation to ensure patient safety. We appreciate your understanding.

Sincerely,



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

RG:ja

Attachments