

Pamela Anderson's New Brand Evokes 1990s Nostalgia

Anderson was diagnosed with hepatitis C in 2001 and was cured in 2015.

March 18, 2024 By Laura Schmidt

Featuring clothes inspired by some of her iconic '90s outfits, Pamela Anderson's [new collaboration with the denim brand RE/DONE](#), which promotes sustainability, harks back to the time when she was married to her first husband, musician Tommy Lee, and raising their two sons, a period during which the actress [was diagnosed with hepatitis C virus \(HCV\)](#).

In March 2002, the actress stated on Larry King Live that she had contracted HCV by sharing tattoo needles with Lee, who was allegedly infected and didn't inform her. Shortly after her diagnosis, Anderson [became a spokesperson for the American Liver Foundation](#) to raise awareness and reduce stigma surrounding the disease.

[HCV is transmitted](#) when the blood of an infected person passes into the blood of an uninfected person. HCV is most easily spread through direct blood-to-blood contact, such as needle sharing or sexual contact with someone who has HCV.

Anderson reportedly thought she was going to die because there was no cure at the time.

"They said I would die in 10 years," Anderson [told ABC News](#). "When someone tells you something like that, you kind of act differently subconsciously."

Today, HCV is curable in most cases thanks to new medications. In fact, HCV treatment is easier and shorter than ever.

Nonetheless, it's estimated that 2.4 million Americans are living with chronic HCV (about 1% of the adult population), according to [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). What's more, in 2020, nearly 15,000 people died of HCV in the United States, and acute HCV cases quadrupled from 2009 to 2019.

Worldwide, about 58 million people are living with chronic HCV, according to the [World Health Organization](#). It's estimated that globally, 290,000 people died as a result of HCV in 2019.

After living with HCV for 16 years, Anderson was cured in 2015 after completing a 12-week

regimen of Sovaldi. The direct-acting antiviral medication cost around \$100,000 and was covered by her health insurance.

In an Instagram post that has since been deleted, Anderson acknowledged the exorbitant price of treatment and wrote: “I pray anyone living with Hep C can qualify or afford treatment. It will be more available soon. I know treatment is hard to get still....”

To read more, click [#Hepatitis C](#) or read Hep’s [Health Basics on Hepatitis C](#). It reads in part:

Hepatitis C (HCV) is [transmitted](#) when the blood of an infected person passes into the blood of an uninfected person. Hep C is most easily spread through direct blood-to-blood contact, such as:

- Sharing needles and other equipment (paraphernalia) used to inject drugs. Injection drug users who share needles, syringes and paraphernalia associated with injecting are at the highest risk for HCV.
- Blood transfusions and organ transplants before July 1992. Widespread screening of the blood supply in the United States began in 1992.
- Sexual contact with someone who has HCV. The risk of becoming infected with hepatitis C through unprotected sexual intercourse is low but possible.
- Having an HCV-positive mother. Women who are infected with hepatitis C have a 6% chance of passing the virus along to their babies during pregnancy or delivery. The risk increases significantly if the woman has HIV, hepatitis B or a high HCV viral load (the amount of HCV in a measurement of blood).

You may be at risk for hepatitis C and should contact your health care provider for a blood test if you:

- Were born between 1945 and 1965, regardless of any other HCV-related risk factors;
- Were notified that you received blood or an organ from a donor who later tested positive for hepatitis C;
- Have ever injected illegal drugs, even if you experimented only a few times many years ago;
- Received a blood transfusion or solid-organ transplant before 1992;
- Received a blood product for clotting problems before 1987;
- Have HIV;

- Have ever been on long-term kidney dialysis;
- Have evidence of liver disease (e.g., persistently abnormal liver function tests);
- Have an HCV-positive mother;
- Have been exposed to HCV through your occupation. (Note: The risk to health workers of acquiring HCV following a needlestick injury is quite low, averaging 1.8%.)

Although the risk is uncertain, you may also be at risk if you:

- Have ever gotten a tattoo or piercing in a nonprofessional setting where equipment such as ink, inkwells or needles, were used and potentially unsterilized;
- Have had multiple sexual partners or sexually transmitted diseases;
- Have ever inhaled cocaine or shared other non-injecting drugs.

If you have any [risk factors](#) for HCV, then the [next step is to get tested for it](#). First, you'll be given the HCV antibody test to determine whether you have been exposed to the virus. The next test is the viral load test, which identifies whether you have been merely exposed or actually have HCV. If that test is positive, then a genotype test is done to determine what kind of HCV you have.