

# **RISK OF HCV TO SEXUAL PARTNERS**

**Committee Update**

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66<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
June 15-16, 2000  
Holiday Inn, Silver Spring  
8777 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD

**Blood Product Advisory Committee Meeting, June 16, 2000**

**Update: Sexual Transmission of HCV**

**At the December 1997 Blood Products Advisory Committee meeting, the issue of whether or not sexual partners of persons who test positive for antibody to hepatitis C virus (anti-HCV) should be deferred, was addressed.**

**At that meeting, scientists from NIH, CDC and the Harvard School of Public Health presented data from studies of anti-HCV-negative spouses or sexual partners of individuals with anti-HCV. The data indicated that transmission of hepatitis C virus between spouses and sexual partners appears not to be a problem.**

**Under current procedures, prospective donors who are sexual partners of anti-HCV-positive individuals may donate blood, at the discretion of blood establishments' Medical Directors, provided that their partner does not have a history of clinically apparent viral hepatitis during the year prior to donation.**

**A somewhat different approach has been taken with regard to donors of tissues for transplantation. The July 29, 1997 FDA Guidance for Industry document entitled "Screening and Testing of Donors of Human Tissue Intended for Transplantation" states that persons who have had sex in the preceding 12 months with any person suspected of having hepatitis C virus infection should not be accepted as a tissue donor. FDA will be reconsidering this policy for tissue transplantation.**

**FDA is maintaining an awareness of results of further studies that are designed to evaluate sexual transmission of HCV. While sexual transmission of HCV may occur, such events appear to be rare. For this reason, history of an HCV positive sexual partner is not a strong correlate of HCV risk in a donor.**