



NEWS RELEASE

Merck Joins with the American Liver Foundation to Educate U.S. Veterans on Chronic Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Infection

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Events Across the Country Will Raise Awareness of Veterans' Increased Risk for Chronic HCV Infection

KENILWORTH, N.J.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Merck (NYSE:MRK), known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, today announced a collaboration with the American Liver Foundation to raise awareness among U.S. veterans about their increased risk for chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection. Chronic HCV infection can slowly damage the liver and may cause serious liver disease decades following initial infection, often without apparent symptoms. Through the initiative, the American Liver Foundation will join events in cities across the country to educate veterans about risk factors for chronic HCV infection, as well as how they can be tested and treated, if appropriate.

Chronic HCV infection is the most common blood-borne disease in the United States, affecting approximately 3.5 million people. Veterans are three times more likely to have chronic HCV infection than the general population. The risk is highest for veterans born between 1945 and 1965, who are five times more likely than other veterans to have chronic HCV infection. In addition to age and veteran status, other risk factors for chronic HCV infection include having undergone a transfusion with blood or blood products before 1992, having injected drugs, having gotten body piercings or tattoos, or being infected with HIV.

"Despite their increased risk for chronic hepatitis C virus infection, too many veterans remain undiagnosed," said Thomas F. Nealon III, chief executive officer of the American Liver Foundation. "We are proud to work with Merck on this important initiative, which we believe will help many veterans better understand their risk, as well as their options for getting tested and linked to care."

Through the program, educational events will initially be held in Boston, Philadelphia, Phoenix and San Diego. At the events, educators from the American Liver Foundation will speak with veterans about their potential risk factors for chronic HCV infection and provide tips and resources for those who are at-risk or living with the disease.

“At Merck, we are deeply grateful for the service and sacrifices that veterans have made for our country,” said John Schwind, executive director, Merck. “We will continue working on behalf of veterans through initiatives such as this, as well as through our broader commitment to hiring veterans and providing resources to support employees transitioning to civilian life.”

For more information about the educational events and to learn more about the impact of chronic HCV on veterans, please contact your local American Liver Foundation office.

About Chronic Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Infection

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is a chronic viral infection that is spread through contact with infected blood and can cause serious liver problems, including cirrhosis (scarring of the liver) and liver cancer. Chronic HCV slowly damages the liver, often without showing symptoms. In many cases, the infection is not recognized until problems with the liver have already developed.

About The American Liver Foundation

The American Liver Foundation is a trusted voice and resource for patients with liver disease. Its mission is to facilitate, advocate and promote education, support and research for the prevention, treatment and cure of liver disease. The Foundation’s 16 divisions across the country provide support to patients, families and the general public. It funds research that has helped further careers of young scientists in the field of liver health in the hopes of finding treatments and cures for liver disease.

For more information, visit the [American Liver Foundation website](#) or call the National HelpLine 1-800-GO-LIVER (1-800-465-4837).

About Merck

For more than a century, Merck, a leading global biopharmaceutical company known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world’s most challenging diseases. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs

and partnerships. Today, Merck continues to be at the forefront of research to advance the prevention and treatment of diseases that threaten people and communities around the world - including cancer, cardio-metabolic diseases, emerging animal diseases, Alzheimer's disease and infectious diseases including HIV and Ebola. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Forward-Looking Statement of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA

This news release of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA (the "company") includes "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of the company's management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results may differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

Risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; general economic factors, including interest rate and currency exchange rate fluctuations; the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and health care legislation in the United States and internationally; global trends toward health care cost containment; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approval; the company's ability to accurately predict future market conditions; manufacturing difficulties or delays; financial instability of international economies and sovereign risk; dependence on the effectiveness of the company's patents and other protections for innovative products; and the exposure to litigation, including patent litigation, and/or regulatory actions.

The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the company's 2016 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the company's other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC's Internet site (www.sec.gov).

Merck

Media:

Michael Close, 267-305-1211

or

Pam Eisele, 267-305-3558

or

American Liver Foundation

Media:

Saara Khadir, 202-591-4010