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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BLDHD Promoting World Hepatitis Day: Testing, Vaccines, and Syringe Services Available
World Hepatitis Day is July 28

Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department (BLDHD) is recognizing World Hepatitis Day on July 28. This global observance raises awareness about viral hepatitis and highlights steps people can take to prevent infection and protect their health.

Untreated hepatitis infections can lead to serious liver conditions such as cirrhosis, liver cancer, and liver failure. The three most common types in the United States are hepatitis A, B, and C. Hepatitis A spreads easily through personal contact and usually resolves without treatment. Hepatitis B and C can become chronic infections and are mainly spread through bodily fluids or use of non-sterile needles. Vaccines are available for hepatitis A and B, but not for hepatitis C. However, hepatitis C can be cured with proper treatment.

"Raising awareness about hepatitis helps people take steps to protect their health and the health of others," said Dr. Joshua Meyerson, Medical Director. "Testing, vaccination, and education are key tools in preventing the spread of this disease."

Hepatitis is a global health threat. According to the [World Health Organization](http://www.who.int) (WHO), about 354 million people live with chronic hepatitis B or C, and more than 1 million people die each year from related complications. WHO has set a goal to eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030, which requires stronger prevention, testing, and treatment efforts.

BLDHD offers vaccines for hepatitis A and B and testing for hepatitis C. Syringe services, HIV testing, sterile equipment, naloxone, and other resources are also available through the Harm Reduction Program. To schedule a visit or learn more, call 231-882-4409 ext 3 or visit BLDHD.org.

BLDHD encourages everyone to take preventive steps, including getting vaccinated, practicing safer sex, and avoiding the sharing of drug equipment. Together, we can stop the spread of hepatitis and support healthier communities.

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