

Accessing treatments for hepatitis C through the Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 – July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement

What you need to know

What is hepatitis C?

Hepatitis is a medical word that describes when your liver is swollen, or inflamed. When this swelling is caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV), the disease is called hepatitis C. It is also a “silent” disease. Often, you will not have symptoms until your liver is badly damaged.

Is hepatitis C common?

Yes. It is estimated that approximately 245,000 people in Canada are infected with the hepatitis C virus.

How does hepatitis C spread?

Hepatitis C is spread through blood-to-blood contact, which means that somehow blood infected with HCV gets into the bloodstream.

Can hepatitis C be cured?

Yes, hepatitis C can be cured. With recent advances in treatment, the chance to be cured is higher than ever before.

If you contracted HCV through tainted blood products between January 1, 1986 and June 30, 1990 and if you are an approved claimant of the Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 – July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement, you may qualify for access to therapies to treat hepatitis C.

What is the Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 – July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement?

The 1986-1990 Hepatitis C Settlement Agreement contains two plans:

■ Hemophiliac HCV Plan

This plan provides compensation to people who are hemophiliacs and persons with thalassemia major, who were infected with HCV through blood products received in Canada between January 1, 1986 and June 30, 1990 and certain members of their families.

■ Transfused HCV Plan

This plan provides compensation to people who were infected with HCV for the first time through a blood transfusion received in Canada between January 1, 1986 and June 30, 1990 and certain members of their families.

People who are approved claimants under the Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 – July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement may be reimbursed for their costs for treatments and generally accepted hepatitis C medications that are not recoverable under any public or private healthcare plan. Private insurance, an employee benefit package, a provincial healthcare plan or a provincial disability program may also cover these costs, in whole or in part. The Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 – July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement will reimburse any amount that is not covered by the aforementioned insurance or health plans.

What are the approval criteria to be eligible for the reimbursement of treatment costs incurred under the Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 – July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement?

Claimants for uninsured medical expenses such as drug therapy must meet all of the following criteria:

- Present a blood test that demonstrates that the HCV antibody is present in his/her blood;
- The treatment and/or medication is generally accepted by the medical community;
- The treatment and/or medication is proven to have been prescribed on the recommendation of one of the following medical specialists:
 - Gastroenterologist
 - Hematologist
 - Hepatologist
 - Oncologist
 - Internist
 - Nephrologist
- The treatment and/or medication was prescribed due to the HCV infection and not due to another medical condition;
- The costs that are claimed were/are not recoverable by or on behalf of the claimant under any public or private healthcare plan;
- Original receipts for all costs incurred or other evidence supporting the actual cost must be delivered to the Hepatitis C Claims Centre.

Learn more about the Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 – July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement

Visit www.hepc8690.ca to learn more about this class actions settlement. You may also contact the Administrator by calling 1-877-434-0944 or emailing info@hepc8690.ca.

Patient support programs offered by pharmaceutical companies

Many companies that make and sell hepatitis C medications have programs to support patients throughout treatment. Part of the support is helping them to determine whether or not they have access to medications and to help cover treatment costs.

One of these programs is called the Gilead Momentum Support Program™. This program can help you and your healthcare provider determine if you qualify for treatment and medication cost reimbursement through the Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 – July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement. Furthermore, the program offers financial assistance specifically for patients who are claimants under one of the two HCV plans.

To enrol in the Gilead Momentum Support Program™, speak to your doctor or nurse or call 1-855-447-7977 for more information.