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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
5451	12.08.2019	14.08.2019	Amritsar Punjab	The Tribune English Newspaper 12 th August, 2019/Page No. 04
Title:	300 inmates found infected with hepatitis C in Amritsar, Punjab			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU-Amritsar, SSU-Punjab			

More than 300 inmates at the Amritsar Central Jail were found to be infected with hepatitis C that the jail authorities suggest can be the result of many undertrials being "drug addicts and have been using contaminated syringes".

Officials say these inmates were being treated at the Civil Hospital, Amritsar, and medical expenses were being borne by the jail authorities.

Sources said during the regular inmates' check-up, many complained of fatigue, poor appetite, discolouration of skin and eyes, yellowish urine, swelling in legs and abdomen disorders. These symptoms hinted that they were infected with hepatitis C, forcing the Jail Department to conduct their thorough check-up and consult the Health Department.

Jail Superintendent Arshdeep Singh Gill ruled out the possibility of drug abuse on the premises, but agreed that more than 300 inmates were found to be suffering from

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**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

22-Sham Nath Marg, Delhi – 110 054

For more information please contact: Media Scanning & Verification Cell: - Phone (011)23946029

Email: - idspsc@nic.in, idsppnpo@nic.in

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hepatitis C. "Though the state government has announced a special programme to fund inmates' medical expenses, it was yet to kick off. We have roped in NGOs to bear their treatment costs," he said.

"You can't be sure of health status of new entrants. It would only be assessed after we conduct their check-up," he said.

Civil Surgeon Dr HS Ghai said jail inmates in the batch of five are being examined for hepatitis C. "Medicines are being provided free to the patients of hepatitis C... the government is even funding the Viral Load Test," he said.

TEST AT ALL JAILS FROM SEPT 1

The government is initiating the process of conducting hepatitis C test at all Central jails in a phased manner from September 1, nodal officer Dr Gagandeep Grover said.

SITUATION ALARMING

- 3,640 inmates, including undertrials, lodged at the Amritsar Central Jail
- 35 admissions, on an average, to jail daily; same number are released or shifted.

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