



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**W.Va. Bureau for Public Health Finds Unsafe Injection Practices
at Valley Pain Management Clinic in McMechen**

ODH Urges Ohio Patients to Consult with Primary Care Provider about Testing

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) is encouraging Ohio patients of a pain management clinic located south of Wheeling to talk with their primary care provider about testing for some infectious diseases following an investigation of the facility by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health (WVBPH). WVBPH has identified possible, unsafe injection practices at Valley Pain Management in McMechen, W.Va., which potentially exposed patients to blood-borne infectious diseases like hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

WVBPH says that prior to November 1, 2013, Valley Pain Management, which opened in 2010, re-used needles/syringes to administer pain medications and saline solutions, and used the same pain medication vial for multiple patients.

“If someone has been a Valley Pain Management patient and received injections, it does not mean that he or she has contracted an infectious disease. It is impossible to predict which patients were potentially exposed to infectious diseases,” said ODH Program Manager of Viral Hepatitis Prevention Maureen Murphy-Weiss. “As a precaution, we are recommending that Ohio residents who have ever been a Valley Pain Management patient talk with their primary care provider about testing for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Some patients could have these serious diseases without any symptoms, and the sooner they are detected, the quicker treatment can begin.”

Patients who have health insurance should talk with their primary care provider about arranging such testing. Patients who do not have health insurance should call ODH toll-free at 844-593-5184 to receive instructions about how to arrange testing.

Valley Pain Management has not been cooperating to public health authorities’ request for a patient list and contact information. ODH is reviewing potential legal options to obtain the names and contact information of Valley Pain Management’s Ohio patients. Meanwhile, ODH is working with the Ohio Department of Medicaid and the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation to identify their consumers who have been Valley Pain Management patients. ODH will attempt to contact patients to make sure that they are aware of their potential exposure risk and know their testing options.

For information about hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), go to the ODH website at www.odh.ohio.gov and click on the A – Z Index.

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