

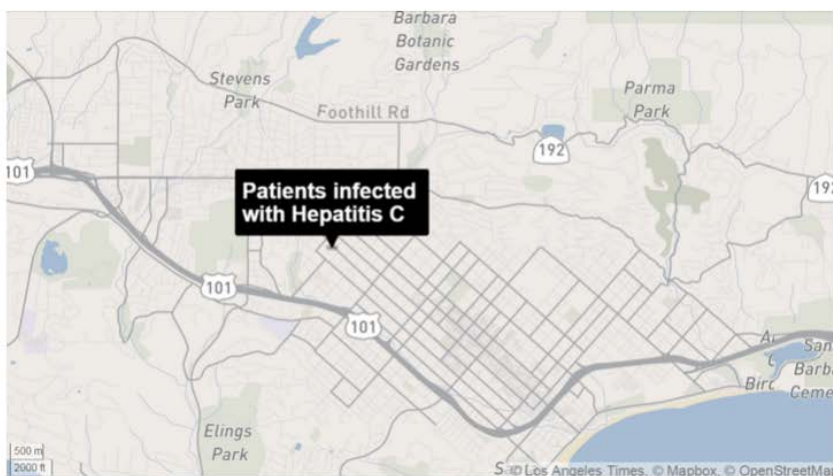


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Los Angeles Times
LOCAL / L.A. Now

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U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Patients infected with hepatitis C after visiting Santa Barbara doctor



Santa Barbara County Public Health Department says at least six patients were infected with Hepatitis C after visiting Allen Thomashefsky's medical office.

By **VERONICA ROCHA**
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- 🐦 Santa Barbara County health officials say patients were infected with hepatitis C after an injection procedure
- 🐦 Patients of Allen Thomashefsky, a Santa Barbara doctor, are urged to get tested for blood viruses

APRIL 28, 2015, 3:57 PM

At least five patients tested positive for hepatitis C after receiving injections at a Santa Barbara doctor's medical office, public health officials said.

Now, the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department is urging any patients who visited the medical office of Allen Thomashefsky to get tested for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV.

Public health officials performed two inspections at Thomashefsky's office in November 2014 after they received information that a patient with no known risk factors developed hepatitis C after a visit. The patient underwent multiple

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injections at his office.

Inspectors examined the office and found unsafe practices that put patients at risk for bloodborne viruses as well as joint infections, according to the department. Public health officials say inspectors found that standard infection control procedures were not practiced.

The multiple medical breaches led public health officials to order Thomashefsky to close his office, which was done March 19.

Thomashefsky did not immediately return requests

for comment.

Thomashefsky performed regenerative injection therapy, or prolotherapy, to treat patients with chronic muscle or joint pain.

The Oregon Medical Board is also investigating the doctor and has limited his medical practice in the state. Thomashefsky, who has an office in Ashland, Ore., was ordered April 14 to stop performing injection procedures.

Four of the five patients who tested positive for hepatitis C had undergone injection procedures at his medical office on the same day they became infected. Three patients had no known risk factors for hepatitis C, an infection that attacks the liver and causes inflammation.

Public health officials have performed 240 tests and no patients have tested positive for HIV.

The department has been contacting Thomashefsky's patients who received injections in the last seven years.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is also performing molecular genetic testing to determine if the hepatitis C virus found in the infected patients originates from the same source.

The public health department and the CDC are investigating the cause of the outbreak.

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