

Hepatitis B

Fact Sheet

www.cdc.gov/hepatitis

1-888-4HEP-CDC



SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ jaundice▪ fatigue▪ abdominal pain▪ loss of appetite▪ nausea, vomiting▪ joint pain <p>About 30% of persons have no sign or symptoms. Signs and symptoms are less common in children than adults.</p>
CAUSE	Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)
LONG-TERM EFFECTS WITHOUT VACCINATION	<p>Chronic infection occurs in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 90% of infants infected at birth▪ 30% of children infected at age 1 – 5 years▪ 6% of persons infected after age 5 years <p>Death from chronic liver disease occurs in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 15 – 25% of chronically infected persons
TRANSMISSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Occurs when blood or body fluids from an infected person enters the body of a person who is not immune.▪ HBV is spread through having sex with an infected person without using a condom, sharing needles or “works” when “shooting” drugs, through needlesticks or sharps exposures on the job, or from an infected mother to her baby during birth. <p>Persons at risk for HBV infection might also be at risk for infection with hepatitis C virus (HCV) or HIV.</p>
RISK GROUPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Persons with multiple sex partners or diagnosis of a sexually transmitted disease▪ Men who have sex with men▪ Sex contacts of infected persons▪ Injection drug users▪ Household contacts of chronically infected persons▪ Infants born to infected mothers▪ Infants/children of immigrants from areas with high rates of HBV infection▪ Health care and public safety workers▪ Hemodialysis patients
PREVENTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Hepatitis B vaccine is the best protection.▪ If you are having sex, but not with one steady partner, use latex condoms* correctly and every time you have sex.▪ If you are pregnant, you should get a blood test for hepatitis B. Infants born to HBV-infected mothers should be given H-BIG (hepatitis B immune globulin) and vaccine within 12 hours after birth.▪ Do not shoot drugs. If you shoot drugs, stop and get into a treatment program. If you can't stop, never share needles, syringes, water, or “works”, and get vaccinated against hepatitis A and B.▪ Do not share personal care items that might have blood on them (razors, toothbrushes).▪ Consider the risks if you are thinking about getting a tattoo or body piercing. You might get infected if the tools have someone else's blood on them or if the artist or piercer does not follow good health practices.▪ If you have or had hepatitis B, do not donate blood, organs, or tissue.▪ If you are a health care or public safety worker, get vaccinated against hepatitis B, and always follow routine barrier precautions and safely handle needles and other sharps.

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VACCINE RECOMMENDATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Hepatitis B vaccine available since 1982.▪ Routine vaccination of 0 – 18 year olds.▪ Vaccination of risk groups of all ages (see section on risk groups)
TREATMENT & MEDICAL MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ HBV infected persons should be evaluated by their doctor for liver disease.▪ Adefovir dipivoxil, alpha interferon and lamivudine are three drugs licensed for the treatment of persons with chronic hepatitis B.▪ These drugs should not be used by pregnant women.▪ Drinking alcohol can make your liver disease worse.
TRENDS & STATISTICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Number of new infections per year has declined from an estimated 260,000 in the 1980s to about 78,000 in 2001.▪ Highest rate of disease occurs in 20 – 49 year olds.▪ Greatest decline has happened among children and adolescents due to routine hepatitis B vaccination.▪ Estimated 1.25 million chronically infected Americans, of whom 20 – 30% acquired their infection in childhood.

* The efficacy of latex condoms in preventing infection with HBV is unknown, but their proper use may reduce transmission.

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