



What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a serious liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus. It can be a mild illness lasting a few weeks, or a serious lifelong illness.

1 in 4 people with chronic hepatitis B will develop serious liver problems, even cancer, but treatment and monitoring are available with early detection.

How is hepatitis B spread?

Hepatitis B spreads from person to person through contact with infected blood or body fluids. It can be passed from:

- Pregnant person to baby during birth
- Coming in contact with blood from a person with hepatitis B
- Sharing personal care items such as toothbrushes, razors, nail clippers, or medical equipment (like a glucose monitor) with a person who has hepatitis B
- Sexual contact
- Sharing needles, syringes, or drug preparation equipment

Hepatitis B is NOT spread by:

- Sharing food or eating utensils
- Casual contact like hugging, kissing, or holding hands
- Water or air



For more information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hbv/



DOH 420-405 May 2022

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Source: Minnesota Department of Health, Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B: What everyone should know





Who should get tested?

The only way to know if you have hepatitis B is to get tested.

- All pregnant people should be routinely tested for hepatitis B. If a pregnant person has hepatitis B, timely vaccination can help prevent the spread of the virus to the baby.
- People who live with someone who has hepatitis B.
- People who are at increased risk of hepatitis B, this includes:
 - People born in areas where hepatitis B is more common or whose parents were born in those areas, such as Africa or Asia
 - People who inject drugs
 - Men who have sex with men



Who should be vaccinated?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the hepatitis B vaccine for most people, including:

- All infants
- All unvaccinated children and adults up to age 59, regardless of risk factors
- Adults age 60 and older with risk factors:
 - People at risk for infection by sexual exposure
 - People at risk for infection by percutaneous or mucosal exposure to blood
 - Travelers to areas with moderate or high rates of hepatitis B infection
 - People with chronic liver disease
 - People with HIV infection
 - People who are incarcerated
 - All other people seeking protection from hepatitis B



An estimated 296 million people are living with hepatitis B worldwide, but many don't know they are infected because they don't feel or look sick.



Is the vaccine safe?

The hepatitis B vaccine is safe and effective. It has been used in the U.S. since 1982.

More than one billion doses of hepatitis B vaccine have been given worldwide.

The most common reactions to the vaccine are mild to moderate fever and soreness where shot was given. These side effects may last 1-2 days.



Where can I get the hepatitis B vaccine?

Talk to your pharmacy, health care provider, or local health department about getting vaccinated. Some clinics offer free or low-cost hepatitis B vaccines.

Health insurance may cover vaccine for all people up to age 59, and people over 60 with risk factors.

If you give birth, your baby can get the hepatitis B vaccine at the hospital before you leave. The vaccine is given at no cost for newborns.