



HEPATITIS B

GET TESTED. GET VACCINATED.





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Hepatitis B (Hep B) and Your Liver

Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver. Your liver keeps you healthy in many ways. It removes toxins from your body and transforms nutrients from food into energy.

Hep B can cause serious health problems, including liver scarring, liver failure, liver cancer and early death. There are different types of hepatitis. Hep B is caused by the Hep B virus that infects and attacks the liver.

Hep B can be prevented with a safe vaccine and can be treated to slow or stop development of serious liver damage. People living with Hep B can live a long and healthy life.



241,000 people
in New York City (NYC)
are living with Hep B.



2.2 million
people in the United States
are living with Hep B.

How does someone get Hep B?

Hep B can be passed from one person to another through blood, semen and vaginal fluids. Some common ways to pass Hep B include:

- During childbirth; a pregnant person living with Hep B can pass Hep B to their newborn.
- Having sex without a physical barrier, such as condoms or dental dams, with a person living with Hep B.
- Sharing or reusing needles, medical or injection equipment, such as for insulin, glucose monitors, drug use, steroids, tattooing or acupuncture.
- Sharing personal care items, such as razors, toothbrushes or any items that could have touched blood, semen or vaginal fluids.

Casual Contact Is Safe

People living with Hep B should not be excluded from work, school, play or child care.

You cannot spread Hep B through:

- Sharing eating utensils, drinking glasses, water or food
- Sneezing, coughing, kissing, hugging or shaking hands



Phases of Hep B

Acute Hep B is a new infection. Most adults who get Hep B fight off the infection without treatment within six months. If you fight off Hep B during the acute stage, you develop immunity, meaning you are protected from getting Hep B. People with a weak immune system, such as infants, children or people living with HIV, are less likely to fight off Hep B during the acute phase of infection.



Chronic Hep B is an ongoing or lifelong infection that develops when the body cannot get rid of the virus within six months. Most people living with chronic Hep B got it when they were infants or very small children.

Hep B symptoms

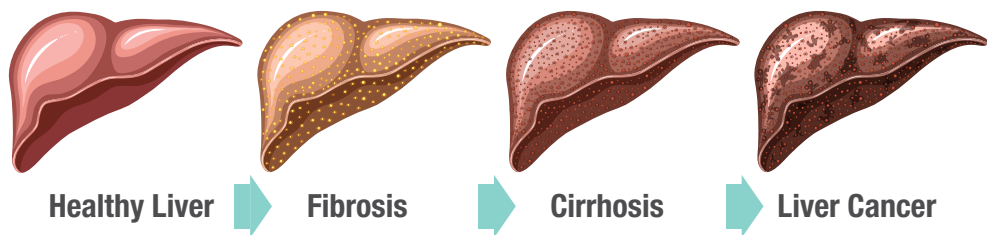
Signs and symptoms of acute Hep B can include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, grey-colored stools, joint pain or jaundice (yellowish coloring of the skin or eyes). These symptoms usually go away after a few weeks.

Most people who develop chronic Hep B do not have symptoms for many decades and may not be aware of their infection but can still spread the virus. When symptoms do appear, they are often a sign of advanced liver disease, when the liver is no longer able to do its job. The only way to know if you have Hep B is to get tested.



How chronic Hep B affects health

People with chronic Hep B can develop serious liver damage, including scarring, fibrosis (moderate liver damage) and cirrhosis (severe liver damage). Liver damage usually happens slowly, over 20 to 30 years. People living with chronic Hep B are at risk for liver cancer at any stage of disease and should be checked for liver cancer every six months.



Get Tested: Know Your Hep B Status

Ask your health care provider to test you for Hep B if you are at risk.

Are You at Risk for Hep B?

If you answer “yes” to any of the following questions, get tested for Hep B:

- Was the person who gave birth to you living with Hep B when you were born?
- Were you or your parents born in a country with a high rate of Hep B? (See list on next page.)
- Are any of your sexual partner(s) living with Hep B?
- Are you a man who has sex with men?
- Do you live with someone who is living with Hep B?
- Are you living with HIV?
- Have you ever injected drugs or shared any drug use equipment (such as needles, cookers, cotton, straws or rinse water)?



Where Hep B Is Common

Hep B is very common in the countries* listed below. **If you were born in a country on this list, you should get tested for Hep B.****

AFRICAN REGION

All countries except Seychelles

AMERICAS REGION

Belize, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, French Guyana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Peru, Puerto Rico, Suriname, parts of Brazil, southern Colombia, northern Bolivia, indigenous populations in North America

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGIONS

Bangladesh, Bhutan, Djibouti, Palestine (Gaza Strip), India, Kuwait, Libya, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

EUROPEAN REGION

Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan

WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Kiribati, Laos, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, South Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Tahiti, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Vietnam

* Countries where the prevalence (number of people newly diagnosed with and living with Hep B) of chronic Hep B infection is greater than 2%

** World Health Organization Regions

Understanding your Hep B test results

Your health care provider may perform some of these tests to confirm that you have Hep B.

		Tests			Meaning of Results	Next Steps
		Hep B Surface Antigen (HBsAg)	Hep B Surface Antibody (anti-HBs)	Hep B Core Antibody (anti-HBc)		
Results	-	-	-	No Hep B infection or immunity. At risk for Hep B.	Get vaccinated.	
	-	+	+	Developed immunity from fighting off Hep B infection. Make sure your health care provider knows you had Hep B in the past.	No vaccine needed.	
	-	+	-	Developed immunity from completing Hep B vaccination series.	No vaccine needed.	
	+	-	+	Currently living with Hep B.	Get care with a Hep B health care provider. More testing is needed.	
	-	-	+	Results unclear – possible past or current infection.	Get care with a Hep B health care provider. More testing is needed.	

- means negative test result

+ means positive test result

Get Vaccinated: Protect Yourself and Others

If you do not have Hep B, and are not immune, get vaccinated to prevent Hep B. The Hep B vaccine comes in a two- or three-dose series and is safe and effective.

You are immune to Hep B if:

- You have been exposed to Hep B in the past, but your body got rid of the virus. You can only know this by getting tested for Hep B.
- You were successfully vaccinated. Ask your health care provider to check if the vaccine worked for you.

Get Care and Treatment

It is important to get medical care with a health care provider who is experienced with Hep B. Your health care provider may perform additional tests to find out how Hep B is affecting your health, such as:

- **Hep B DNA tests** to check the amount of Hep B virus in your blood.
- **Liver Function Tests** to measure the amount of liver inflammation.
- **Liver Ultrasound or Fibroscan** to look for liver damage by providing a picture of the shape, size or stiffness of the liver.
- **Liver Cancer Screening** by using blood tests and ultrasound.



Liver cancer screening is recommended for adults living with Hep B every six months.



Even if you feel healthy, Hep B may be damaging your liver. Go to a health care provider who has experience treating Hep B to check your liver health and Hep B status.

Ask your health care provider about Hep B treatment

Hep B antiviral medications can slow or stop the virus from damaging the liver.

If you are on Hep B treatment, take your medication as prescribed to prevent liver damage from the virus. Do not stop taking your medications without speaking with your health care provider.

Ask your health care provider these important questions about next steps and living with Hep B:

- What is my Hep B DNA viral load?
- How much liver damage do I have?
- Do I need Hep B antiviral treatment?
- Do I need to be vaccinated for hepatitis A to protect my liver health?
- What should I do to protect my liver every day?
What should I avoid?
- Is it safe for me to take my other medicines including over-the-counter medicines, acetaminophen (Tylenol), herbal medicines, vitamins and supplements?
- How can I protect people I live with or have sex with from Hep B? When should they be tested and vaccinated?

Living With Hep B

People living with Hep B can live a long and healthy life. Here are a few ways to protect your health.

Avoid alcohol.

Alcohol damages the liver. It is safest for your health to not drink alcohol at all. Cutting down also helps. For support in reducing alcohol use, ask your health care provider or read the Information and Resources section to find more support services, including NYC Well.

Ask your health care provider before taking natural remedies or over-the-counter medicines.

Ask your health care provider before taking over-the-counter medicines, herbal medicines, vitamins or supplements as these can be dangerous for your liver. These include acetaminophen, iron, herbs or other natural supplements and vitamins. Tell your health care provider that you have Hep B so they can help you avoid medications that may harm your liver or make Hep B worse.

Prevent fatty liver and manage chronic diseases.

Fatty liver, a buildup of extra fat in the liver, can lead to liver damage. Excessive alcohol use, or having diabetes or obesity, can lead to a fatty liver, which can make Hep B worse. Ask your health care provider how to prevent fatty liver and manage chronic diseases.

Get vaccinated against hepatitis A.

Hepatitis A is another virus that can damage your liver. People living with Hep B may experience a quicker and more severe or fatal illness if they get hepatitis A infection.

Practice harm reduction and safer sex.

To prevent exposure to blood, do not share or reuse medical equipment or drug use supplies and use physical barriers during sex.

Get support

Share your feelings about being diagnosed with Hep B with your health care provider and people you trust.

Living with Hep B may not always be easy but talking to your health care provider and people you trust can help you manage your feelings and get the support you need. Get support about living with Hep B by calling the American Liver Foundation at 800-GO-LIVER (800-465-4837). Read the Information and Resources section for more information.

To meet and learn about other people living with Hep B, visit hepb.org/research-and-programs/patient-story-telling-project.



Protect others from Hep B

Because you can pass Hep B to others, you should encourage people in your household, people you have sex with and people you share needles, medical or injection equipment with to get tested and vaccinated for Hep B.

- Do not share or reuse medical equipment. Make sure that new or sterile equipment is always used for acupuncture, tattooing or injection (for example, needles for insulin, steroids or medicine).
- Do not share or reuse drug use supplies. Only use new or sterile equipment or works such as needles, syringes, cotton, cups, ties, razors, cutters, rinse water, cookers, straws or pipes.
- Use physical barriers, such as condoms or dental dams, during sex until your partner is fully vaccinated and immune to Hep B.
- Do not share personal care items such as needles, razors, toothbrushes or any other item that may have touched blood, semen or vaginal fluids.
- Cover cuts and open sores with bandages, and make sure others do not touch your blood.
- Wash hands well after touching your blood or body fluids such as semen or vaginal fluids.
- Clean up blood spills with a bleach solution of one-part bleach and nine-parts water.

If you or someone you know was recently exposed to Hep B, get Hep B post-exposure prophylaxis.

Call your health care provider right away and ask about Hep B immunoglobulin, a medication that can help stop the virus from spreading in the body. To be effective, it must be given within seven days after being exposed.



Pregnancy, Children and Hep B

Pregnancy and Hep B

All people who are pregnant are required to get tested for Hep B during each pregnancy. If you are pregnant and living with Hep B, talk to your health care providers about how to prevent passing Hep B onto your child during delivery.

To prevent Hep B, your baby must receive one dose of the Hep B vaccine (the birth dose) and one dose of the Hep B immunoglobulin immediately after birth, no later than 12 hours after delivery. Be sure to include this in your birth plan.

Your newborn will need to complete the Hep B vaccine series within the first nine months of life. Children must be tested for Hep B after completing the Hep B vaccine series to make sure they have developed immunity. The testing should be completed no earlier than at 9 months of age.

Ask your health care provider to check your Hep B status and liver health regularly during pregnancy and after delivery.



If you need help or support with breastfeeding or nutrition, speak with your or your newborn's health care provider. You can also visit wicstrong.com or call the Growing Up Healthy Hotline at 800-522-5006.

Hep B is not spread through breast milk, unless there is blood present. Do not share food that has been in your mouth. Do not pre-chew food for babies.



Talk with your health care provider if you have questions about taking Hep B antiviral medications if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. Do not stop taking medications without speaking to your health care provider.

Children and Hep B

Vaccination is the best way to prevent Hep B. All children should complete the Hep B vaccine series and be tested to make sure they have developed immunity. If your child has Hep B, it is important to get care with a health care provider who is experienced in Hep B.

If your child has Hep B, you are not required to tell teachers, day care providers, other children or their parents. Everyone should practice general precautions to prevent the spread of infectious disease.

Information and Resources

Find more information about Hep B.

NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Call **311** and ask about “Hepatitis B” or visit nyc.gov/health/hepb.

Hepatitis B Foundation

Call 215-489-4900 or visit hepb.org. Information is available in multiple languages.

American Liver Foundation

Call 800-GO-LIVER (800-465-4837) or visit liverfoundation.org.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Visit cdc.gov/knowhepatitisb. Information is available in multiple languages.

Find Affordable Hep B Care Near You NYC Health Department

Visit nyc.gov/health/hepb.

Find Low Cost Hep B Medical Care at NYC Public Hospitals

Visit nyc.gov/health/map.

NYC Well

NYC Well is a free, confidential mental health and substance use support helpline. Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week in over 200 languages.

- Call 888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355).
- Text “WELL” to 65173.
- Visit .

Find Health Insurance

To talk to a counselor for free about how to sign up for low- or no-cost health insurance, visit nyc.gov/health and search get covered, text “CoveredNYC” to 877-877 or call **311**.

Find Other Benefits and Programs

To find additional services, visit access.nyc.gov. Information is available in multiple languages.

Hep B Community Coalition

To learn more about the NYC Health Department’s community coalition, visit hepfree.nyc.



