

KNOW YOUR STATUS AND TREAT HEPATITIS B

If you think you
have been exposed
to hepatitis B, ask
your health care
provider to get
tested.





FDA encourages diverse participation in clinical trials.


If you think a clinical trial may be right for you, talk to your health care provider.


You can also search for clinical trials in your area at www.clinicaltrials.gov.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

 www.fda.gov/healthequity

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What is hepatitis B?

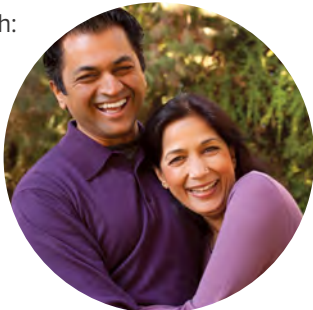
Hepatitis B virus (HBV) causes inflammation of the liver. If left untreated, it can lead to lifelong health problems and serious liver damage. The best way to prevent HBV infection in children and adults is vaccination.

Hepatitis B is spread when a person comes in contact with blood, semen, or other body fluids from an infected person. People can become infected with the virus from:

- sex with an infected partner
- sharing needles, syringes, or drug preparation equipment
- mother to child during childbirth
- coming in contact with blood or open sores of an infected person
- needle sticks or sharp instrument exposures
- sharing items (such as razors and toothbrushes) with an infected person

HBV is **not** spread through:

- food or water
- sharing eating utensils
- breastfeeding
- hugging
- kissing
- hand-holding
- coughing
- sneezing



Hepatitis B may be an acute (short-term) infection for some people. For other people, HBV stays in their body, becoming a chronic (long-term) infection. Chronic infection may lead to serious liver damage such as scarring, hardening, and failure, which can lead to death. The likelihood that HBV will develop from acute to chronic varies by age. The younger a person is when infected with HBV, the greater the chance of developing a chronic infection over time.



Get tested and know your status!

Many people living with chronic HBV don't know that they're infected because they do not look or feel sick. However, they can still spread the virus to others.

A blood test can determine your status as to whether you have been infected with HBV in the past, are currently living with HBV, or are not infected. People living with chronic HBV should be checked regularly for signs of liver disease and evaluated for possible treatment options.



How is hepatitis B treated?

Health care providers usually do not treat HBV unless it becomes chronic. Resting, eating healthy foods, and drinking lots of fluids will help you recover from acute HBV.

If you are living with chronic HBV, talk to your health care provider about starting a treatment regimen. There are three types of treatment options for chronic HBV.

- **Antiviral medications:** Medications taken by mouth to help your body fight the virus and lower the chances of liver damage.
- **Interferon injections:** Injections consisting of interferons, which are substances produced by cells in the body to help fight infections.
- **Liver transplant:** If chronic hepatitis B leads to liver failure or liver cancer, you may need a liver transplant as a last resort. A transplant is a surgical procedure that removes your unhealthy liver and replaces it with a healthy liver from a donor.

