

CANCER PREVENTION

Hepatitis B: Hepatitis B is a contagious liver disease caused by a virus that can range from mild illness to a severe lifelong illness and even death.

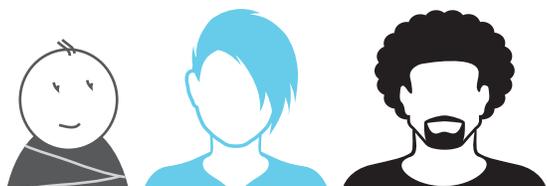
Did You Know?

90% protection
rate after completing all three doses of vaccine.

700,000
individuals in the United States are infected with hepatitis B.

Hepatitis B
can be acute or chronic.

1,000 deaths
from liver disease or liver cancer each year in the United States.



Acute Hepatitis B	Chronic Hepatitis
Individual experiences a mild short-term illness after contracting the virus and recovers within six months. However some acute cases become chronic.	Individual experiences a serious long-term illness after contracting the virus. Chronic cases can lead to scarring of the liver and liver cancer.
Most individuals who get infected with hepatitis B are considered acute. The younger a person is when infected with the hepatitis B virus the greater the chance that they will develop chronic hepatitis B. In fact, 80–90% of infants infected during the first year of life and 30–50% of children infected before the age of 6 years develop chronic infections.	

What are the signs and symptoms?

Yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes, dark colored urine, loss of appetite or nausea, bloated and tender belly, extreme tiredness, fever and pain in joints. Some individuals infected with hepatitis B do not have symptoms but carry the virus in them for the rest of their lives.

How is hepatitis B infection spread?

Hepatitis B is transmitted through infected blood and other bodily fluids to another person. This spread can occur when an infected person has unprotected sexual contact, mom to baby during pregnancy and birth, sharing earrings, razors or toothbrushes, human bites, unsterilized needles used in tattoos and/or piercings and illicit drug use.

Are vaccines currently available?

Yes, for children and adults. Talk to your health care professional or medical provider to see if vaccination is right for you and your family.

When is vaccination recommended?

The current recommendation is for all infants and children to be vaccinated against hepatitis B infection. The hepatitis B vaccine offers 90 percent protection after individuals complete all three doses of the vaccine.

