

Know the risk of Hepatitis B

You may be at high risk of infection...

If you live or work in a residential facility. Staff who have direct hands-on resident care are considered at risk.

If your occupation is:
nurse, physician or laboratory technician; firefighter or police officer; emergency medical services personnel; mortician or embalmer; dentist, dental hygienist or other healthcare professional.

If your personal life involves...
sexual contact with more than one partner in a six month period.

If you travel to:
areas where hepatitis B is common.

If you or a member of your family is from:
Eastern Asia or Africa

If a member of your family:
has acute or chronic hepatitis B or is a carrier of hepatitis B.

How you get it...

Hepatitis B virus is easier to “catch” than you realize.

The virus is found mainly in blood, semen and vaginal fluid but has also been found in saliva, stool, urine and sweat. If you come into frequent contact with blood or other body fluids, the virus can enter your body through an opening in the skin or through your eyes or mouth.

It can make you very sick...

Hepatitis B attacks your liver and can make you extremely ill-sick enough to affect your job and your personal life. In a small percentage of patients (less than 1%) hepatitis B is the direct cause of death. The disease can lead to cirrhosis of the liver or liver cancer. A higher percentage of persons with Down syndrome develop chronic hepatitis B or become carriers (chronically infectious to others).

Help protect yourself with a vaccination

- Three shots of vaccine usually provide protection.
- The newer vaccines are not made from blood products. You cannot get AIDS or hepatitis B from the vaccine.
- Soreness, swelling, and redness at the site of vaccination are the most common side effects.
 - For adults, we recommend checking a blood test 4 to 6 weeks after the third shot to confirm immunity (effectiveness)