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# HEPATITIS B



# NEWSLETTER

## Hepatitis B

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### How common is Chronic Hepatitis B?

- Chronic Hepatitis B is known to be a global problem.
- More than 250 million people are chronically infected with Hepatitis B virus.
- Chronic infection causes more than 650 000 deaths each year.

### How likely is it that acute Hepatitis B will become chronic?

- The likelihood depends on the age at which a person becomes infected.
- The younger a person is when they are infected with Hepatitis B virus, the greater the chance that the infection will become chronic.
- Approximately 90% of infants who are infected around the time of birth will develop chronic infection.
- The risk decreases as you get older, dropping to around 5% if you are infected as an adult.

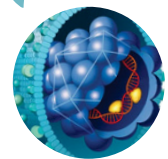
### How is Hepatitis B spread?

Hepatitis B virus is spread when blood, semen or other body fluids infected with the virus, enters the body of an uninfected person. Potentially hazardous activities include:

1. Having unprotected sex with an infected partner.
2. During birth. (When the virus spreads from the mother to her baby.)
3. Exposure to blood through needle sticks or other injuries caused by sharp instruments.
4. Sharing drug-injection equipment such as: needles and syringes. (Including sharing infected needles for acupuncture, piercings and tattooing.)
5. Sharing items such as toothbrushes or razors with an infected person.
6. Direct contact with the blood or open sores of an infected person.
7. The majority of adults who are infected with Hepatitis B virus will develop symptoms, while the majority of young children do not.



Hepatitis B virus is NOT spread by: food, water, sharing eating utensils, coughing, sneezing, hugging, kissing, holding hands or breast feeding.



## How can I avoid infecting others with Hepatitis B?

If you have Hepatitis B infection you can reduce your chances of giving Hepatitis B to other people through the following:

- Discuss the infection with **any sexual partners** and use a condom during all sexual encounters.
- **Nothing with blood** on that includes razors and toothbrushes, should be shared.
- Avoid donating blood, sperm, or organs.
- Cover any open **wounds, scratches, or sores**.
- Immediately **clean up any blood spills** with detergent or bleach.
- Make certain that **your immediate family and household contacts are tested** to determine whether they need the **Hepatitis B vaccination**.
- You can participate in any activity, including contact sports.
- Children with Hepatitis B should not be separated from their peers.

## How will I know if I have Hepatitis B?

If you are concerned that you have Hepatitis B, consult your doctor. **A blood test** will be performed to determine whether you are infected. Chronic hepatitis B is diagnosed when the virus has been found in the body for more than 6 months.

## How is acute Hepatitis B treated?

People who are infected with Hepatitis B heal on their own; no specific Hepatitis B virus treatment is required. Over the next few weeks, you possibly should drink a great deal of water and eat nourishing foods. You ought to refrain from anything that will put extra strain on your liver, such as Alcohol.

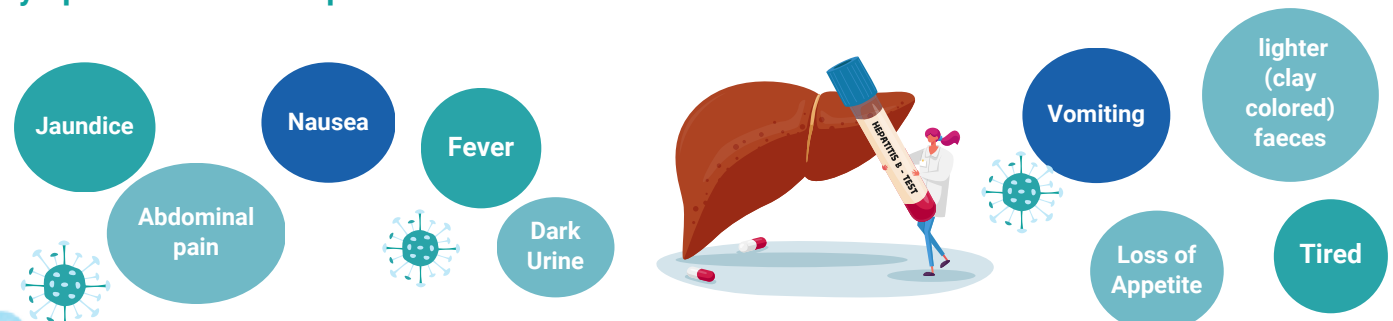
## How is chronic Hepatitis B treated?

Some individuals with chronic Hepatitis B require medication. Your healthcare provider will check on you on a regular basis for signs of **liver disease**. This may include **regular blood tests**, an ultrasound examination of the liver, and even removing a small piece of the liver for testing, called a Biopsy.

## How likely is it that acute Hepatitis B will become chronic?

- The likelihood of an infection is determined by the age at which a person becomes infected.
- The younger a person is when infected with the Hepatitis B virus, the more likely the infection will become chronic.
- Approximately 90% of infants infected shortly after birth will develop chronic infection.
- The risk decreases with age, reaching around 5% if you are infected as an adult.

## Symptoms of acute Hepatitis B include:



**These symptoms usually last for a couple of weeks but some people may remain sick for up to six months. People who have chronic Hepatitis B generally exhibit no symptoms, nevertheless they can develop serious Liver problems such as scarring (called Cirrhosis) and Liver cancer over time.**