

HEPATITIS B

Hepatitis B Information

Hepatitis B is a communicable disease caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV). The virus is found in blood and certain body fluids. Hepatitis B is spread when a person who is not immune comes in contact with blood or body fluid from an infected person. Hepatitis B is spread by having sex with an infected person without a condom, sharing needles or "works" when "shooting" drugs, needle sticks or sharps exposures in a health care setting, or from an infected mother to her baby during vaginal birth. Exposure to blood in ANY situation can be a risk for transmission. Between 5,000 and 6,000 Americans die of hepatitis B-related liver complications including cirrhosis and liver cancer each year.

About 1/3 of people who are infected with hepatitis B in the United States don't know how they got it.

How is Hepatitis B Spread?

Hepatitis B is spread through the contact with the blood and body fluids of an infected person. A person can get infected in several ways, such as:

- by having unprotected sex with an infected person
- by sharing needles when injecting illegal drugs
- by being stuck with a used needle on the job
- during birth when the virus passes from an infected mother to her baby

What are the Symptoms?

Hepatitis B can make you feel like you have the flu. You might feel tired, sick to your stomach, have a fever or not want to eat. You might have stomach pain or diarrhea. Some people have dark yellow urine, light-colored stools or yellowish eyes and skin. Some people don't have any symptoms. If you have symptoms or think you might have hepatitis B, go to a doctor.

You Can NOT Get Hepatitis B by

- Shaking hands with an infected person
- Hugging an infected person
- Sitting next to an infected person

How Can I Protect Myself?

Fortunately, there is a safe and effective vaccine to protect against hepatitis B infection. It is recommended that all infants, children and adolescents up to the age of 18 receive the hepatitis B vaccine. The vaccine is also recommended for adults who may be at high risk for infection. Hepatitis B vaccine may be given at the same times as other vaccines.

How Much Does it Cost?

Hep B adult clinic fee \$45/dose and individual appt \$47.50/dose.

Hep B [vaccine for children] under 19: clinic fee \$5/dose and individual appt \$17.50/dose

Note: This is a 3 dose series

Contact Us

To receive more information, or schedule a Hepatitis B vaccination, call or visit us at:

Clinton County Health Department
Health Services Unit
133 Margaret Street
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
Tel: (518) 565-4848