

PROTECT THOSE YOU LOVE

Be sure your spouse, sex partners, children, and those with whom you are in close personal contact are vaccinated against hepatitis B. There is a safe and effective vaccine that can prevent HBV infection.

Be careful in handling your blood to avoid spreading it to others.

Cover all cuts with a bandage. Avoid unprotected sex with a partner who has not been vaccinated. Do not donate blood or body organs. Properly discard tampons and feminine napkins in plastic bags. Do not share personal items that could contain blood, such as toothbrushes, nail clippers, pierced earrings, shaping equipment, or needles of any kind.

To clean any blood spills or any other body fluids that may contain blood, a diluted solution of household bleach is recommended (1 part chlorine bleach with 9 parts water). Common rubbing alcohol is another useful disinfectant. If possible, rubber or latex gloves should be worn by those cleaning up spills. Properly dispose of cleaning materials in plastic bags, tied securely. Wash hands thoroughly in warm, soapy water.

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

If you have chronic HBV and are pregnant, be sure to protect your newborn by having the HBV vaccine and HBV immune globulin (HBIG) given immediately after delivery. This procedure is effective more than 90 percent of the time and can prevent your newborn from becoming infected with hepatitis B during the birth process.

Talk to your doctor about receiving the hepatitis A vaccine.

It is important to protect your liver, which is already affected by HBV, from another type of viral hepatitis.

Be sure your pharmacist and health care provider recommend medications that are not harmful to your liver. This includes both over-the-counter and prescribed medications. There are many drugs that are processed in the liver which can cause damage.

Avoid inhaling fumes from paint, paint thinners, glue, and household cleaning products. Some of these products contain phenol and benzene, which are known to damage the liver.

THE HEPATITIS B FOUNDATION ADVISES THAT YOU DISCUSS WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THIS BROCHURE AND ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS YOU MAY HAVE AS A PERSON LIVING WITH CHRONIC HEPATITIS B.

CAUSE FOR A CURE

The Hepatitis B Foundation is a national non-profit organization dedicated to finding a cure and improving the quality of life for those affected by hepatitis B worldwide. Our commitment includes funding focused research, promoting disease awareness, supporting immunization and treatment initiatives, and serving as the primary source of information for patients and their families, the medical and scientific community, and the general public. Dr. Baruch Blumberg, who received the Nobel Prize for discovering the hepatitis B virus, is one of the co-founders of the organization.

**For more information
please call or write:**

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Hepatitis B Foundation

Cause for a Cure

Living With Chronic Hepatitis B



Hepatitis B Foundation

Cause for a Cure

ABOUT HEPATITIS B

Hepatitis B is the world's most common, serious liver infection. It is caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV), which can be transmitted through blood, sex, shared needles, and from an infected mother to her newborn during deliver. Hepatitis B is spreading because many people are unaware they are infected with the virus and unknowingly pass it on to those who are in close contact with them. There are 400 million people chronically infected worldwide, and in the U.S. alone, there are 1.25 million people living with chronic hepatitis B.

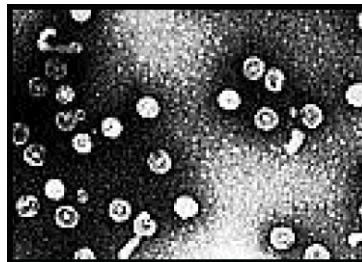
CHRONIC HEPATITIS B

Someone with chronic hepatitis B has HBV in their liver and blood. Although most people successfully recover from an HBV infection and develop antibodies against the virus, up to 10 percent of infected adults (and 90-95 percent of infected children under 1 year) fail to clear the virus from their bodies. They remain infected indefinitely. The major concern for those with chronic hepatitis B is that after many years of infection, they have an increased possibility of developing cirrhosis and/or liver cancer. But they should expect to enjoy a long and healthy life by maintaining their overall health and following sensible precautions.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BLOOD TESTS

Someone with chronic hepatitis B by definition has signs of the hepatitis B virus in their blood. There are several types of blood tests to help with the diagnosis. Be sure to discuss your tests with your health care provider for the most accurate interpretation of your situation. The following results are typical in a chronic infection:

- *All chronic HBV patients will be positive for hepatitis B surface-antigen (HBsAg+). The surface antigen is the protein coat of the virus. It is easily detected in a blood test because infected persons produce larger amounts of HBsAg than other parts of the virus,*
- *The level of infectiousness is determined by another HBV protein, the hepatitis B e-antigen (HBeAg). If this is positive, there is a high level of virus in the blood which increases infectiousness. If this is negative, there is a low level of the virus which decreases infectiousness.*
- *People with chronic hepatitis B may also have antibodies to the core of the hepatitis B virus (HBcAb+), but these are not helpful in clearing the virus like other antibodies you may have.*



THE ROLE OF YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Individuals living with chronic HBV should contact a liver specialist (a hepatologist or gastroenterologist) or other physicians who are knowledgeable about liver diseases. Scheduling regular visits to monitor the health of your liver is very important. If there is any disease progression, you want to detect it as early as possible in order to benefit from the current treatment options.

- *Adults and children who have chronic HBV should arrange regular check-ups. Six month check-ups are standard, but the schedule depends on what you and your health care provider decide is best. Visits to monitor your liver will include: a physical exam; blood tests for liver function enzymes, alpha feto protein and HBV markers; and possibly ultra sound imaging of your liver.*

HBV TREATMENTS

The future is bright because of new treatment options and several promising drugs in the research pipeline. Currently there are seven drugs approved for chronic hepatitis B by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

- *Interferon alpha* (injection)
- *Pegylated interferon* (infection)
- *Lamivudine* (oral)
- *Adefovir* (oral)
- *Entecavir* (oral)

- *Telbivudine* (oral)
- *Tenofovir* (oral)

Although here is still no complete cure, the good news is that these drugs appear to reduce the risk of progressive liver disease. And combined with emerging drugs in clinical trials, there is great hope that a successful cure is on the horizon.

Please be sure to consult your physician for treatment advice before taking any medications. And for updates, contact the Hepatitis B Foundation.

DIET AND ALCOHOL

HBV and alcohol is a dangerous mixture. Studies have shown that even small amounts of alcohol can cause damage to an already weakened liver. Avoiding alcohol is one decision you can make that will significantly reduce your risk of further liver disease.

Do not eat foods that are moldy or have been improperly stored. Raw seafood is another food to avoid.

Although there is no diet specific for those living with chronic HBV, it is known that eating green and yellow vegetables (especially cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower) is good for the liver. These tend to protect the liver against chemicals from the environment. The American Cancer Society's diet, which includes foods low in fat, low in cholesterol, and high in fiber is beneficial to your liver as well as your entire body.