

A photograph of a woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a blue patterned hospital gown, holding a newborn baby in her arms. The woman is looking down at the baby with a gentle expression. The background is softly blurred, showing hints of a hospital room with flowers.

Let's talk about the facts:

- ❶ *FALSE: Doctors know the hepatitis B status of every single pregnant patient they have.*
*FACT: Many people do not have access to prenatal care, and testing errors are common, making it **impossible for us to know the hepatitis B status of every single mom**. The hepatitis B birth dose is the only way to ensure that we can prevent mother-to-child transmission from the start.*
- ❷ *FALSE: “If a woman doesn’t have risk factors, if nobody at home has hepatitis, I don’t see the benefit.”*
*FACT: The data is very clear that risk-based vaccination is NOT effective at preventing new infections – including among the most vulnerable. This is why we moved away from risk-based hepatitis B birth dose recommendation 30 years ago. **Approximately 70% of people in the U.S. have undiagnosed chronic HBV**, and we usually don’t know if someone at home has the virus. In fact, 9,000 babies a year were infected before universal recommendations – not due to mother to child transmission – due to accidental exposure in infancy or childhood. Vaccinating every baby against hepatitis B, beginning at birth, protects them all.*
- ❸ *FALSE: “Vaccines shouldn’t be one size fits all.”*
*FACT: Universal hepatitis B vaccination works because of how infectious the virus is. **Even a microscopic amount of exposure to the virus can lead to a lifelong infection**. Changes to the well-established universal recommendation will also disrupt the current schedule, leading to confusion among parents and doctors alike, and will potentially disrupt manufacturing and access.*
- ❹ *FALSE: “The risk of a baby dying of hepatitis B is 1 in 7 million.”*
*FACT: It is a fact that the hepatitis B virus leads to premature death. A baby infected with hepatitis B has up to a 40% chance of dying in the prime of their life from hep B related liver cancer or liver failure. **The hepatitis B vaccine does not kill – the virus does.***
- ❺ *FALSE: “The vaccine was studied only for 4 days.”*
*FACT: With more than 1 billion doses of the hepatitis B vaccine given over the last 50 years, this is **one of the most well-studied vaccines in history**. The hepatitis B vaccine is safe for newborns, children and adults.*