

Hepatitis B, Acute

Agent: Hepatitis B virus (Hepadnavirus)

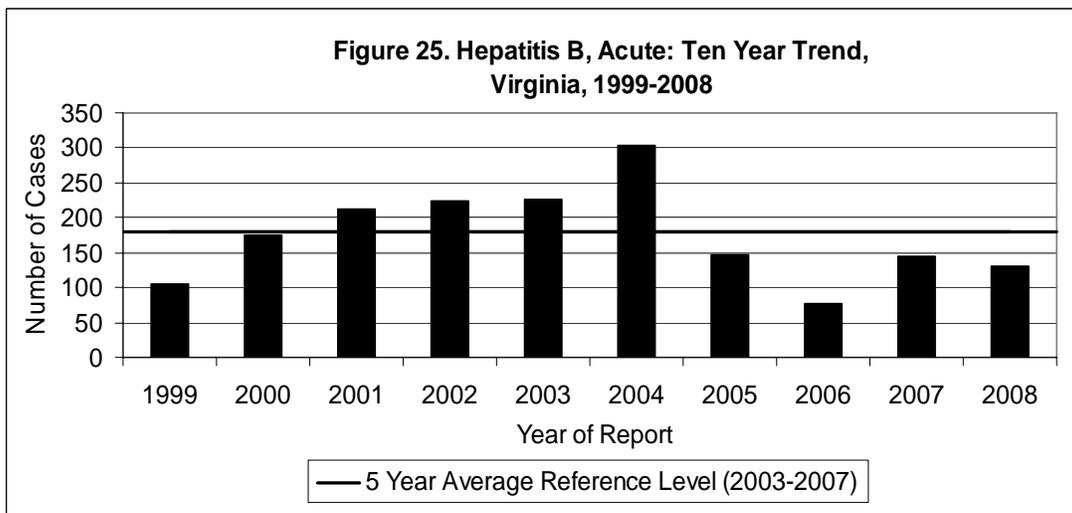
Mode of Transmission: Person-to-person transmission by blood or body fluid exposure (e.g., sexual, perinatal, or through the skin, such as during injection drug use).

Signs/Symptoms: Fever, general feeling of illness, nausea, abdominal pain, and jaundice. Infection can be asymptomatic. The likelihood of developing symptoms is age-dependent.

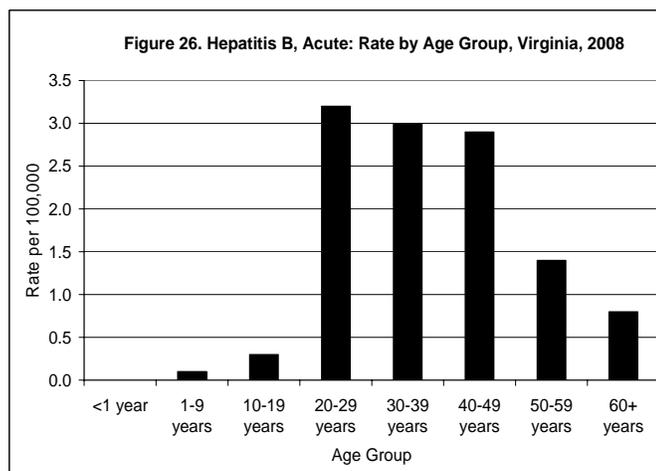
Prevention: Strategies include immunization of people at increased risk of infection; screening of all pregnant women and treatment of children born to positive women; routine immunization of infants; routine immunization of adolescents who have not previously been immunized; and screening of donated blood and organs.

Other Important Information: Infection with hepatitis B virus may lead to chronic (long-term) infection. Death from liver disease occurs in 15%-25% of those with chronic infection.

The 130 cases of acute hepatitis B infection reported in Virginia during 2008 represent a 10% decrease from the 144 cases reported in 2007, and a 28% decrease from the five year average of 179.6 cases per year (Figure 25).



By age, the highest incidence rates were seen in the 20-29 and 30-39 year age groups (3.2 and 3.0 per 100,000, respectively), followed closely by the 40-49 year age group (2.9 per 100,000) (Figure 26). Only four cases (3%) were reported in individuals under the age of 20. Thirty-five percent of reports were missing race information. Among cases with



race reported, the rate in the black population (2.1 per 100,000) was more than two times the rate in the white population (0.9 per 100,000), and ten times the rate in the “other” population (0.2 per 100,000). The rate of occurrence in males was more than double the rate in females (2.4 and 0.9 per 100,000, respectively). The southwest region had the highest rate of acute hepatitis B cases (3.5 per 100,000), followed by the central region (2.9 per 100,000). The other regions had rates between 0.5 and 1.4 per 100,000. Acute hepatitis B infections do not have a seasonal pattern. Information on risk factors was available for 43% of the reported cases. Multiple sex partners was the most frequently reported potential source of infection for hepatitis B and accounted for 30% of the cases with known risk factors. Among the cases reported in 2008, one death in an adult male was attributed to acute hepatitis B infection.