

Do you qualify for free Hepatitis B vaccine?

Some health departments and free clinics offer free hepatitis B vaccine. If you are an adult (19 years of age or older), you may qualify if one of these describes you:

- You are sexually active with more than one partner
- You have diabetes
- You are a household contact of a person with hepatitis B
- You are a sex partner of a person with hepatitis B
- You are seeking evaluation or treatment for a sexually transmitted disease (STD)
- You are a male who has sex with males (MSM)
- You are a current or recent injection-drug user (IDU)
- You have HIV infection

Note: Persons less than 19 years of age qualify for free hepatitis B vaccine at health departments because it is required for school entry.

For more information

Visit our website at:

<http://www.vdh.state.va.us/vahbii>

Visit the CDC's website on HBV at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/B/bFAQ.htm#overview>

Where do you get Hepatitis B Vaccine?

Local health departments in your area may provide free hepatitis B vaccine if you qualify as a high-risk adult. Your primary care physician may also have the vaccine.

To contact the health department in Virginia closest to you, visit:

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/lhd/>

Call for walk-in hours or make an appointment. Some may charge a small administration fee.

Virginia Department of Health
Division of Immunization
109 Governor Street
Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 864-8055

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/vahbii>

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- Division of
Immunization

Hepatitis B Know the Facts

Get Vaccinated!



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Hepatitis B and You

What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a serious disease caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV) that attacks the liver. It causes the liver to swell and prevents it from working well. HBV can be spread to other people.

Most adults exposed to HBV fully recover after six months. However, a small percentage (5%) have HBV all their lives.

Is hepatitis B a serious problem?

Yes. Each year, thousands of people of all ages in the United States get hepatitis B. About 5,000 persons die of chronic (life-long) liver problems caused by HBV.

Approximately 1.25 million persons in the U.S. are infected with chronic hepatitis B. Chronic infection can lead to cirrhosis, liver failure and liver cancer.

How is hepatitis B spread?

It is spread by:

- Contact with the blood of a person with hepatitis B.
- Contact with infected bodily fluids such as semen or vaginal secretions, e.g., contact during sex.
- A woman with HBV can spread the virus to her newborn baby while giving birth.

Who is at risk for hepatitis B?

You may be at higher risk of infection if:

- You are sexually active with more than one partner
- Your sex partner or a household member has hepatitis B
- You are a man who has sex with men
- You have had a sexually transmitted disease
- You use injection drugs
- You have a job that exposes you to human blood and/or bodily fluids
- You have diabetes
- You lived in, immigrated from or traveled for an extended period in a country where hepatitis B is common
- You have HIV infection
- You have worked or lived in a prison
- You are a kidney dialysis patient

What are the symptoms of hepatitis B?

People with acute or chronic HBV may not have symptoms. When symptoms occur, they may include tiredness, fever, loss of appetite, nausea, headache, muscle soreness, pain near the liver and jaundice. Jaundice is yellowing of the skin and the whites of the eyes.

Symptoms often begin two to five months after infection. Symptoms usually last for several weeks, but can last up to six months.

- **A safe, effective hepatitis B vaccine and a combination hepatitis A/hepatitis B vaccine are available.**
- **Vaccination is your best protection against infection.**
- After three valid doses of hepatitis B vaccine, greater than 90% of healthy adults develop adequate antibody response to provide protection for life.
- Vaccination involves three injections over approximately six months. You must receive all three doses for full protection.
- **Some health departments offer hepatitis B vaccine for free.** Please see the backside of this pamphlet for information on the closest location.

Ways to Protect Yourself and Others

- Get vaccinated against hepatitis B.
- Do not have unprotected sex. Use condoms every time with sex partners.
- Do not share personal items like razors or toothbrushes. If you are diabetic, do not share monitoring or treatment devices.
- Do not allow your blood or body fluids to come into contact with others. Keep breaks in the skin such as cuts, sores or bites covered.
- Avoid contact with others' blood and body fluids.
- Do not share injection drug equipment like needles, syringes and cookers.
- Healthcare workers should follow standard precautions.