



Hepatitis B: The STI Facts

What is Hep B?

Hepatitis B (Hep B) is a virus that affects the liver. It can be chronic, which means a person will have it their whole life. Hep B can be prevented with vaccination.

Hep B often has no symptoms. This means you won't know you have it unless you get a blood test. Even without symptoms, it can be passed on. Symptoms can include fever, headache, feeling sick (nausea), stomach pain, flu like illness, vomiting, dark wee (urine), tiredness (fatigue), general aches and pains, yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice).

Without proper treatment, Hep B can cause long-term swelling of the liver. It can also develop into serious illnesses including liver failure, cancer and death.

How do you get Hep B?

Hep B can be passed when blood, semen, or other body fluids from a person with Hep B enters the body of someone who does not have Hep B. The most common time people get Hep B is early in life. Babies can get Hep B from their mother before or during birth.

Some other ways you can get Hep B are:

- having vaginal, anal or oral sex without a condom
- piercing your skin with non-sterile equipment (sharing needles, syringes or other injecting equipment and tattooing)
- sharing toothbrushes, razors and or nail files
- if body fluid from a person with the infection comes into contact with an open wound of another person.

You cannot get Hep B from kissing, hugging, holding hands, coughing, sneezing, sharing food, drinks or eating utensils, insect or animal bites (including mosquitos) or from sharing bathrooms, showers or toilets.

How can I prevent Hep B?

- Get vaccinated for Hep B through a course of three injections over six months. Vaccination is very safe and reliable. Talk to your doctor about Hep B vaccination.
- Use condoms and dams during oral, vaginal or anal sex. Condoms can prevent Hep B from being passed on.
- Do not share injecting equipment, razor blades, toothbrushes and sex toys.

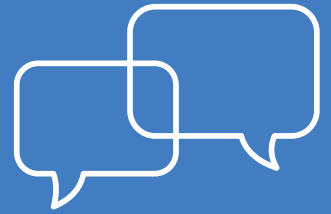
You can get sterile injecting equipment from your [local needle and syringe program](#). These are free, anonymous and confidential services. You can also get sterile injecting equipment from some pharmacies.

How do I test for Hep B?

Hep B is tested for by a blood test. You need to ask your doctor to do a Hep B test. It is not part of normal blood tests done by your doctor. If you have been exposed to Hep B it is important to see your doctor straight away.

Hep B tests are easy, confidential and nothing to be ashamed about.

If you test positive for Hep B, it's important to let your sexual partners know so they can get tested and treated too. If you need help contacting your partners ask your doctor or call the [Hepatitis Infoline](#) on 1800 803 990 (free call).



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How do you treat Hep B?

There is no cure for Hep B.

Many adults will naturally get rid of Hep B without treatment, but some people (particularly young children) can develop chronic health conditions that need regular care. People with chronic Hep B can take medicines to prevent liver damage. Medicines for Hep B will help you stay healthy and live well.

Where can I find more information on Hep B and other STIs?

For information and support about Hep B or STIs and your sexual health, you can call the [Sexual Health Infolink](#) on 1800 451 624 (free call) to speak to a specialist sexual health nurse. It's free, confidential, and non-judgemental. You can also call the [Hepatitis Infoline](#) on 1800 803 990 or visit the [International Student Health Hub](#).

If you would like an interpreter to help you access health services or information, please contact the [Translating and Interpreting Service](#) on 131 450.

Scan the QR code to find out more about Hep B and STIs

