

Hepatitis B Vaccinations Prevent Liver Cancer



“Protect your liver now, prevent cancer later”

Over 2 million people in the United States are estimated to be infected with hepatitis B and it is a leading cause of new liver cancer cases and death^{1,2}. Liver disease and long-term damage to the liver from causes such as hepatitis B can eventually lead to liver cancer (also known as hepatocellular carcinoma). Did you know that by getting the hepatitis B vaccine, you are also reducing your risk of developing liver cancer?

Most individuals are vaccinated against hepatitis B at birth; however, adults born prior to 1991 may not have received this vaccine and be at risk for developing hepatitis B. Once you receive the vaccine, it can provide immunity against hepatitis B for several years.³

Hepatitis B Vaccine Overview



What is the vaccine?

- Like other vaccines, the hepatitis B vaccine works by helping your body to produce its own protection (through antibody production) against the hepatitis B virus.
- The hepatitis B vaccine does not contain blood products or copies of the live virus.
- You cannot get hepatitis B, or other diseases, from this vaccine.⁴



Why should we vaccinate?

- **Anyone can be at risk of getting hepatitis B**
- Infection with hepatitis B can go undetected for years since it has no symptoms. This increases the risk for it to develop into cirrhosis and liver cancer. It also increases the risk for it to be spread easily and without knowledge.⁵
- When the vaccine is given at birth, it has shown to reduce a person's risk of liver cancer by 84% and death from liver disease by 70%.⁵
- People with chronic hepatitis B infections have a 15-25% risk of dying from hepatitis, cirrhosis, liver cancer, or other diseases caused by hepatitis B.⁶

1. Hepatitis B Foundation. Chronic hepatitis B is far more prevalent among U.S. residents than previously reported [Internet]. Doylestown, PA: 2026 [cited 2026 Jun 10]. Available from: <https://www.hepb.org/news-and-events/news-2/chronic-hepatitis-b-is-far-more-prevalent-among-u-s-residents-than-previously-reported/>

2. University of Texas MD Anderson. Hepatitis B and your cancer risk [Internet]. Houston, TX: 2025 [cited 2026 June 10]. Available from: <https://www.mdanderson.org/cancerwise/hepatitis-b-and-your-cancer-risk.h00-159780390.html>

3. Hepatitis B Foundation [Internet]. Doylestown, PA: 2026 [cited 2026 Jun 10]. Available from: <https://www.hepb.org/>

4. Hepatitis B Foundation. Vaccine for Hepatitis B [Internet]. Doylestown, PA: 2026 [cited 2026 Jun 10]. Available from: <https://www.hepb.org/prevention-and-diagnosis/vaccination/>

5. Qu C, Chen T, Fan C, Zhan Q, Wang Y, Lu J, Lu LL, Ni Z, Huang F, Yao H, Zhu J, Fan J, Zhu Y, Wu Z, Liu G, Gao W, Zang M, Wang D, Dai M, Hsia CC, Zhang Y, Sun Z. Efficacy of neonatal HBV vaccination on liver cancer and other liver diseases over 30-year follow-up of the Qidong hepatitis B intervention study: a cluster randomized controlled trial. PLoS Med. 2014 Dec 30;11(12):e1001774. doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1001774. PMID: 25549238; PMCID: PMC4280122.

6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Fast Facts: Global Hepatitis B Vaccination [Internet]. Atlanta, GA: 2024 [cited 2026 Jun 10]. Available from: https://www.cdc.gov/global-hepatitis-b-vaccination/data-research/index.html#cdcreference_2





How do you get hepatitis B?

- Hepatitis B can most commonly be transmitted through:
 - Blood
 - Sexual/bodily fluids
 - A pregnant mother to her infant



When should I get vaccinated?

- Most people who have never been vaccinated should receive the hepatitis B vaccine.⁷
- You may need to be revaccinated for hepatitis B if a blood test shows your immunity (protection) has faded.⁸
- Don't wait, timing matters
 - Talk with your doctor about getting tested for hepatitis B and vaccination before you start any cancer treatment or undergo stem cell transplant.



How is it given?

- The most common vaccination schedules are a two-dose series or a three-dose series.⁹
 - The first dose can be given as soon as possible
 - The second dose is typically one month after the first dose
 - If receiving the three-dose series, it is typically given 6 months after the first dose



Where can I get the vaccine?

- Check for availability at your doctor's office or local pharmacy.
- Most insurance plans and Medicare Part D fully cover the hepatitis B vaccine. Check with your insurance provider or pharmacist to see if the vaccine is covered.

You may need antiviral prevention medication if:

- Blood tests show a past or current hepatitis B infection, and/or
- You are starting a treatment with high risk of causing hepatitis B reactivation.

7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Adult Immunization Schedule Notes [Internet]. Atlanta, GA: 2025[cited 2026 Jun 10]. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-notes.html#note-hepb>

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