

About Hepatitis B Vaccine Information Statements

VACCINE INFORMATION STATEMENT

Hepatitis B Vaccine

What You Need to Know

Many Vaccine Information Statements are available in Spanish and other languages. See www.immunize.org/vis.
Hoja de Información Sobre Vacunas están disponibles en Español y en muchos otros idiomas. Visite <http://www.immunize.org/vis>

1 What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a serious infection that affects the liver. It is caused by the hepatitis B virus.

- In 2009, about 38,000 people became infected with hepatitis B.
- Each year about 2,000 to 4,000 people die in the United States from cirrhosis or liver cancer caused by hepatitis B.

Hepatitis B can cause:

- Acute (short-term) illness.** This can lead to:
 - loss of appetite
 - diarrhea and vomiting
 - tiredness
 - jaundice (yellow skin or eyes)
 - pain in muscles, joints, and stomach
- Acute illness, with symptoms, is more common among adults. Children who become infected usually do not have symptoms.**
- Chronic (long-term) infection.** Some people go on to develop chronic hepatitis B infection. Most of them do not have symptoms, but the infection is still very serious, and can lead to:
 - liver damage (cirrhosis)
 - liver cancer
 - death

Chronic infection is more common among infants and children than among adults. People who are chronically infected can spread hepatitis B virus to others, even if they don't look or feel sick. Up to 1.4 million people in the United States may have chronic hepatitis B infection.

2 Hepatitis B vaccine: Why get vaccinated?

Hepatitis B vaccine can prevent hepatitis B, and the serious consequences of hepatitis B infection, including liver cancer and cirrhosis.

Hepatitis B vaccine may be given by itself or in the same shot with other vaccines.

Routine hepatitis B vaccination was recommended for some U.S. adults and children beginning in 1982, and for all children in 1991. Since 1990, new hepatitis B infections among children and adolescents have dropped by more than 95% – and by 75% in other age groups. Vaccination gives long-term protection from hepatitis B infection, possibly lifelong.

3 Who should get hepatitis B vaccine and when?

Children and Adolescents

- Babies normally get 3 doses of hepatitis B vaccine:

1st Dose:	Birth
2nd Dose:	1-2 months of age
3rd Dose:	6-18 months of age

Some babies might get 4 doses, for example, if a combination vaccine containing hepatitis B is used. (This is a single shot containing several vaccines.) The extra dose is not harmful.
- Anyone through 18 years of age who didn't get the vaccine when they were younger should also be vaccinated.

Adults

- All unvaccinated adults at risk for hepatitis B infection should be vaccinated. This includes:
 - sex partners of people infected with hepatitis B,
 - men who have sex with men,
 - people who inject street drugs,
 - people with more than one sex partner,
 - people with chronic liver or kidney disease,
 - people under 60 years of age with diabetes,
 - people with jobs that expose them to human blood or other body fluids,
- Other people may be encouraged by their doctor to get hepatitis B vaccine; for example, adults 60 and older with diabetes. Anyone else who wants to be protected from hepatitis B infection may get the vaccine.
- Pregnant women who are at risk for one of the reasons stated above should be vaccinated. Other pregnant women who want protection may be vaccinated.

Adults getting hepatitis B vaccine should get 3 doses — with the second dose given 4 weeks after the first and the third dose 5 months after the second. Your doctor can tell you about other dosing schedules that might be used in certain circumstances.

English- and Spanish-language versions of the hepatitis B Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) are available on the next four pages. VISs are information sheets developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to inform vaccine recipients – or their parents or legal representatives – about the benefits and risks of vaccines.

Federal law requires that hepatitis B VISs, and other VISs, be handed out before the vaccine is administered. English- and Spanish-language hepatitis B VISs are shown on the following pages.

► For more information about how to use VISs, visit www.immunize.org/vis.

► For hepatitis B VISs in many languages, visit www.immunize.org/vis/vis_hepatitis_b.asp.

6 What if there is a moderate or severe reaction?

What should I look for?

- Any unusual condition, such as a high fever or unusual behavior. Signs of a serious allergic reaction can include difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, a fast heart beat or dizziness.

What should I do?

- Call a doctor, or get the person to a doctor right away.
- Tell your doctor what happened, the date and time it happened, and when the vaccination was given.
- Ask your doctor, nurse, or health department to report the reaction by filing a Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) form. Or you can file this report through the VAERS web site at www.vaers.hhs.gov, or by calling 1-800-822-7967.

VAERS does not provide medical advice.

7 The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program

The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) was created in 1986.

Persons who believe they may have been injured by a vaccine can learn about the program and about filing a claim by calling 1-800-338-2382 or visiting the VICP website at www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation.

8 How can I learn more?

- Ask your doctor. They can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information.
- Call your local or state health department.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
 - Call 1-800-232-4636 (1-800-CDC-INFO) or
 - Visit CDC's website at www.cdc.gov/vaccines

Vaccine Information Statement (Interim)
Hepatitis B Vaccine

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