Protect Your Baby for Life

When a Pregnant Woman has Hepatitis B

What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis is inflammation of the liver. Hepatitis B is a serious liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus.

How is it spread?

The hepatitis B virus is spread when someone comes into contact with blood, semen, or other body fluids from an infected person.

This can happen through sex with an infected person or direct contact with an infected person where blood is passed through breaks in the skin or soft tissue such as the nose, mouth and eyes, or when an infected mother passes it to her baby at birth.

Perinatal hepatitis B

Perinatal hepatitis B occurs when a hepatitis B-positive mother passes the virus to her baby at birth. This can occur during a vaginal delivery or a cesarean section birth (also known as a C-section).

All pregnant women should get a blood test for hepatitis B as part of their prenatal care.

When babies become infected with hepatitis B, they have about a 90% chance of developing a lifelong chronic infection.

Left untreated, about 1 in 4 children who have chronic hepatitis B will eventually die of health problems related to their infection, such as liver damage, liver disease, or liver cancer.

If you have hepatitis B, healthcare providers can give your baby a series of shots beginning at birth to prevent your baby from getting hepatitis B.

Take care of yourself

You may need additional tests to check the health of your liver and see if you need treatment.

Medications, called antivirals, can treat many people with hepatitis B. However, not everyone needs the treatment.

Ask a doctor before taking any prescription, over-the-counter medications, supplements, or vitamins because some drugs can potentially damage the liver.

You may also benefit from the hepatitis A vaccine.

Continue to see a doctor after giving birth to monitor your infection.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Your baby should get the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine and a shot called hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) within 12 hours of being born.

HBIG is a medicine that gives your baby's body a "boost" or extra help to fight the virus as soon as he or she is born. The HBIG shot is only given to babies of mothers who have hepatitis B. The HBIG and hepatitis B vaccine shots help prevent your baby from getting hepatitis B.

These shots work best when they are given within 12 hours after your baby is born.

All the hepatitis B shots are necessary to help keep your baby from getting hepatitis B.

Your baby will get 3 or 4 shots in all, depending on your baby's birth weight and the vaccine brand. After the first shots are given in the hospital, the next shot is usually given at 1 to 2 months of age. The last shot is given when your baby is six months old. Ask your doctor or nurse when your baby needs to come back for each shot.

Make sure your baby gets tested after completing the series of shots.

After getting all the hepatitis B shots, your doctor will test your baby's blood. This blood test tells you and your doctor if your baby is protected and does not have hepatitis B. The blood test is usually done 2 to 3 months after completing the series of shots.

Your baby should be <u>at least</u> 9 months of age before getting this test.

You can breastfeed your baby if your baby gets HBIG and the hepatitis B vaccine within 12 hours of birth.

You cannot give your baby hepatitis B from breast milk.

Ask your doctor if you should still breastfeed if you have cracked nipples or open sores on your breast.

DON'T WAIT - VACCINATE.

Age	Single-antigen hepatitis B vaccine (Engerix-B® or Recombivax HB®)	Combination hepatitis B vaccine (Pediarix®)
Birth *(Within 12 hours)*	Hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) ***AND*** Hepatitis B vaccine dose #1	Combination vaccines is not approved for the birth dose. See single-antigen guidance.
1-2 Months	Hepatitis B vaccine dose #2	Hepatitis vaccine dose #2
4 Months	No vaccine needed	Hepatitis B vaccine dose #3
6 Months	Hepatitis B vaccine dose #3	Hepatitis B vaccine dose #4
9-12 Months	Postvaccination serologic testing Hepatitis B Surface Antigen (HBsAg) ***AND*** Hepatitis B Surface Antibody (anti-HBs)	Postvaccination serologic testing Hepatitis B Surface Antigen (HBsAg) ***AND*** Hepatitis B Surface Antibody (anti-HBs)

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