



Hepatitis B - the basics

What is hepatitis B? (hep-a-tite-is)

- Hepatitis B is a blood borne virus. It is often called hep B.
- Hepatitis B can damage the liver. It can cause liver cancer.
- Hepatitis B is very common in our community.

How do you get hepatitis B?

You can get hepatitis B from someone who has hepatitis B if:

- Their blood gets into your blood stream
- Their saliva, semen (cum) or vaginal fluid gets into your system through your mouth or genitals.

This means you can get hepatitis B from sharing drug injecting equipment or tattoo equipment with someone who has hepatitis B.

You can also get hepatitis B from:

- having sex without a condom with someone who has hepatitis B
- sharing personal items like toothbrushes, razors, or sex toys
- blood from a person who has hepatitis B getting directly into an open cut or sore.

Babies can be born with hepatitis B if their mother has it.

Can you get hepatitis B from food or water, kissing or hugging, or from mosquitoes, or toilet seats? Or if someone coughs or sneezes on you?

- No.

Is there medicine or a vaccine to prevent hepatitis B?

- Yes! Ask about the vaccine at the clinic.

How would I know if I got hepatitis B?

- Many people who have hepatitis B don't have any symptoms or signs.
- Some people get pain, feel very tired and sick, and lose their appetite.
- Hepatitis B can make your skin and eyes yellow. Your pee might be dark and you might get light coloured poo.



- These symptoms may go away after a few weeks but the hepatitis B can keep damaging the liver.

Get tested

- The only way of knowing whether you have hepatitis B is to get tested.
- You can get tested as part of your health check – just ask.
- The clinic will take a blood sample for testing.

Get treated

- There is no cure for hepatitis B. But there is treatment that can slow the virus down.
- People who have hepatitis B need to look after their health and have liver tests regularly.

Let's look after our health and get tested for hepatitis B and STIs. If we all test and get treated, we can stop the spread of STIs and hepatitis B in our community.