

CU Healthy

SHOULD I GET THE VACCINE?

Public Health strongly recommends that all adolescents and young adults get the Hepatitis B vaccine to protect themselves and to control the spread of Hepatitis B.

WHO SHOULD NOT GET THE VACCINE?

1. People who have allergies to yeast, mercury (thimerosol) or aluminum.
2. People who have had Hepatitis B.
3. People who have a flu, cold, or are pregnant.

WHAT IF I DECIDE TO GET VACCINATED?

Come to Health and Counselling Services and speak to a nurse or physician about the vaccine. You will receive a prescription that can be filled at any pharmacy.

HCS wants to CU Healthy! The Health Promotion Team at HCS tries to achieve this through our:

- Resource Centre
- Student Peer Interns
- Health Promotion Advisory Committee
- Website (carleton.ca/health)
- Facebook page
- Newsletters, class presentations, workshops and more . . .

The Health Promotion Team promotes healthy lifestyles and wellness and can provide you with information about stress, colds, nutrition, sexuality, alcohol, etc. Contact the Resource Centre for more information at 613-520-2600 ext. 6544 or cu_healthy@carleton.ca.



2600 CTTC Building
613-520-6674
carleton.ca/health

Hepatitis B



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THE DISEASE

WHAT IS HEPATITIS B?

Hepatitis B is a virus that attacks the liver. It is easily spread from one person to another through contact with bodily fluids.

WHY WORRY ABOUT HEPATITIS B WHEN THERE'S AIDS ?

If you have unprotected sex, you're putting yourself at risk for AIDS, Hepatitis B, and all other sexually transmitted infections. Your chances of getting Hepatitis B from each unsafe sexual encounter is greater because Hepatitis B is 100 times more infectious than HIV. Like AIDS, Hepatitis B has no cure, but unlike AIDS there is a vaccine.

WHO GETS HEPATITIS B?

Anyone can get Hepatitis B, but if you are in your teens or twenties, you are at greater risk. Your risk is increased if you:

- are sexually active
- have unprotected sex
- have more than one sexual partner
- have another STI
- share needles for injecting drugs
- work in health care
- spend large amounts of time in (or are a native of) areas where Hepatitis B is endemic. These areas include Alaska, the Pacific Islands, Africa, Spain, and Southeast Asia.

HOW CAN I GET IT?

1. Sex with an infected person. **USING CONDOMS PROTECTS AGAINST HEPATITIS B.**
2. Contact with blood, semen, vaginal secretions or saliva of an infected person or items contaminated by these body fluids, (toothbrushes, razors, nail files, tweezers, etc.).
3. Sharing needles. This includes needles for steroid injections, ear piercing and tattooing.



WHAT ABOUT KISSING?

Unlike AIDS, it is possible to get Hepatitis B from kissing. The virus can be found in substantial amounts in saliva.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Many people don't have any but they can still become carriers. Those with symptoms may have signs of tiredness, loss of appetite, stomach discomfort and jaundiced skin and eyes. Most people get better and can no longer pass on the virus. A small number die (less than 1%). Others will always carry the virus (9%) and continue to be infectious (able to pass it on to others). They are called "carriers." Some carriers can go on to have chronic liver disease.

THE VACCINE

The vaccine is given in the arm. It is safe and will prevent Hepatitis B. You need three vaccine treatments for protection. There are two schedule options: 1st injection, 1 month, 6 months or 1st injection, 2 months, 4 months.

The vaccine is more than 90% effective. Your arm may be sore after the vaccination. Some people may feel tired, have a headache, or fever, but will feel fine in one or two days.

The Ontario Ministry of Health gives Hepatitis B vaccine to Grade 7 students. The CUSA student drug plan will pay for 80% of the cost for students who have not had the vaccine. You can buy one dose at a time from your pharmacist, or all three doses at once. The cost is under \$100.00 for all three. Free vaccine is available at the Sexual Health Clinic, 179 Clarence St., Ottawa, 613-234-4641, for those at high risk.

REMEMBER

Hepatitis B has no cure but it is one of the few sexually transmitted infections that has a safe and effective vaccine to protect against it.