



Hepatitis B

Description

Hepatitis B is a serious disease caused by a virus (HBV) which is present in the blood and body fluid of an infected individual. Hepatitis makes your liver swell and stop working. The virus can be transmitted prenatally as well as through unprotected sexual intercourse, unsterilized needles, and contact with contaminated blood products. The disease can lead to cirrhosis of the liver or liver cancer.

Symptoms

Many people never have any symptoms from Hepatitis B. However, they can be spreading the virus to others. Those individuals who do get sick, may have the following symptoms:

- You may feel tired, ache all over, have a fever, and feel sick to your stomach.
- You may feel as if you have the flu.
- Your urine may be darker in color than usual.
- Your bowel movements may be light in color.
- Your skin may itch.
- Your skin and eyes may turn a yellowish color, a condition called "jaundice".
- You may experience abdominal pain.

Diagnosis

The diagnosis is made by a health care provider taking a simple blood test to show if you have Hepatitis B.

Treatment

No specific treatment is available for persons who have acute Hepatitis B infection. Supportive and symptomatic care usually are the mainstays for therapy.

Prevention

HEPATITIS B IS PREVENTABLE - THERE IS A VACCINE!!

The hepatitis B vaccine has been available since 1982 and prevents both HBV infection and hepatitis B disease. The vaccine does not contain any live components and is given in a series of three or four doses. Student Health Services offers the vaccine at a low cost (if you can't afford to pay for the series of shots, ask how you can qualify to receive the vaccine for free).

The chart below describes when each dose should be given:

Dose	Timeframe
1st dose	Anytime
2nd dose	1 month after 1st dose
3rd dose	5 months after 2nd dose

Note: The most common side effects from the hepatitis B vaccination are pain at the injection site and mild to moderate fever.

Note: The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices to the U.S. Public Health Service recommends hepatitis B vaccine for everyone 18 years of age and younger, and for adults over 18 years of age who are at risk for HBV infection.

Transmission

Hepatitis B is transmitted through blood, semen, and vaginal secretions. Adults who are at increased risk of HBV infection and who should receive the vaccine include:

- Persons at occupational risk of infection (i.e. Health Care Providers or others who may come into contact with blood)
- Sexually active heterosexual adults with more than one sex partner or a history of a sexually transmitted disease
- Homosexual and bisexual men
- Illicit injection drug users
- Clients and staff of institutions for the developmentally disabled
- Hemodialysis patients
- Household and sex contacts of persons with chronic HBV infection
- Travelers to areas with a high prevalence of hepatitis B

For More Information:

Student Health Services	619-594-5281	Facebook/Twitter	Facebook.com/aztechealth &
Health Promotion	619-594-4133		@AZTEHealth
Visit Our Website at	shs.sdsu.edu	American Social Health Association (ASHA)	
		National STD Hotline	800-227-8922

