

# Hepatitis B is a serious disease...

## Make sure your child is protected!

### What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a serious liver disease caused by a virus.

### How do you catch hepatitis B?

Your child can get infected with hepatitis B if he or she has contact with an infected person's blood. Babies can get the virus from their infected mothers at birth or if they live with or are cared for by an infected person. The virus can be spread just by sharing a toothbrush with an infected person.



### Is hepatitis B serious?

Yes! An infected person can be sick for weeks or months, be hospitalized, and even die.

Babies and many young children who get infected can have the virus in their bodies for life. Most infected people do not feel sick, but the virus can cause serious problems like liver failure or liver cancer later in life.

Ask your child's healthcare provider if your child is up to date for all vaccines!

### Is my child at risk?

Your child is more likely to become infected with hepatitis B if a family member or caregiver is infected. However, exposure to any infected person's blood can cause hepatitis B infection. Anyone can become infected with hepatitis B virus at any time during their lives.

### How can I protect my child from hepatitis B?



Vaccination is the best way to protect your child from hepatitis B. It is important that babies get the first dose of vaccine in the hospital at birth so they will be protected from the virus as early as possible. They should get 2 or 3 more doses (depending on the vaccine used) at later checkups.

Older children and teens who haven't been vaccinated should get their series of hepatitis B shots as soon as possible.

► For more information, visit [www.vaccineinformation.org](http://www.vaccineinformation.org)

For other vaccine handouts in this series, visit [www.immunize.org/vaccine-summaries](http://www.immunize.org/vaccine-summaries)

immunization  
action coalition  
**IAC**  
immunize.org

Technical content reviewed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1573 Selby Avenue • Saint Paul, Minnesota • [www.immunize.org](http://www.immunize.org)  
[www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4306.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4306.pdf) • Item #P4306 (6/13)