



Canadian Liver Foundation
Fondation canadienne du foie

Bringing liver research to life
Donner vie à la recherche sur le foie

Protect Your Baby Against Hepatitis B

Although every mother hopes for a healthy child, there is a serious liver disease that can harm your baby.

What is hepatitis B?

It is an inflammation of the liver caused by the hepatitis B virus. Hepatitis B can lead to severe liver damage and liver cancer. Prevention of this infection is extremely important as there is no cure for chronic hepatitis B. Most people with hepatitis B have no symptoms and can unknowingly transmit the virus to others.

How is hepatitis B spread?

The hepatitis B virus is spread from an infected person to other people through blood and body fluids.

Why should I be concerned?

There is a **high risk** that pregnant women who are infected with hepatitis B will pass this virus on to their infants at birth or soon after delivery. **Most** infants who are infected early in infancy will develop chronic hepatitis B infection that can lead to severe liver disease and liver cancer later in life.

How can I protect my unborn baby from getting hepatitis B?

1. Ask your doctor to test you for hepatitis B while pregnant.
2. Find out from your doctor what your hepatitis B test result is.
3. If test result shows that you have the virus, make sure your baby received the **free** hepatitis B vaccine:
 - First dose of the hepatitis B vaccine with the Hepatitis B Immunoglobulin (HBIG) within 12 hours after birth.
 - Second dose of the hepatitis B vaccine one month after the first dose.
 - Third dose of the hepatitis B vaccine five months after the second dose.

To achieve the best and lasting protection, your baby **must** receive all three doses of the vaccine.

4. After 9 months of age, make sure your baby is protected by asking your doctor to test your baby. The test is usually done 1 to 4 months after the third dose of the hepatitis B vaccine was administered.

Ask your doctor

Have I been tested for hepatitis B?

Yes - When and what is the result?

No - Ask your doctor to test you today.

If your test results show that you carry the hepatitis B virus, make sure your baby receives:

Within 12 hours after birth: HBIG + 1st dose of the vaccine

Date: _____

At one month: 2nd dose of the vaccine

Date: _____

At six months: 3rd dose of the vaccine

Date: _____

At nine or ten months: take a blood test to verify protection against hepatitis B

Date: _____

RESULT

Immune/protected

Non-immune/
not protected

Keep this information with your baby's immunization record.

This information is current for December 2021.