



# Disease of the Month: Hepatitis B

## What is Hepatitis B?

- \* Hepatitis B is a virus that causes inflammation of the liver.
- \* This virus can cause liver cell damage, which could lead to cirrhosis, cancer and death.

## How do I know if I have it?

Only a blood test can tell for certain. See your doctor if you have symptoms of hepatitis B, such as:

- \* Extreme tiredness,
- \* Loss of appetite,
- \* Joint pain,
- \* Yellow skin or eyes,
- \* Dark tea-colored urine, or
- \* If you think you have had direct contact with someone who has hepatitis B.

## How soon do symptoms appear?

Some individuals who are ill with hepatitis B do not have symptoms.

For those that do, symptoms can appear anywhere from 45 to 180 days, however, the average incubation period is 8 to 12 weeks.

- \* 9 out of 10 adults will get rid of the virus from their bodies after a few months. They are said to have acute hepatitis B.
- \* 1 out of 10 adults will never get rid of the virus from their bodies. They are said to have chronic hepatitis B.

## How is Hepatitis B spread?

HBV is spread by exposure to blood or body fluids from an infected person. You may have been infected if:

- \* your mother was infected with hepatitis B when you were born,
- \* you had sex with an infected person,
- \* you lived with an infected person,
- \* you shot street drugs or shared objects contaminated with blood, or
- \* you are a healthcare worker and exposed to infected blood at work.

## Who is at risk?

- \* Infants born to an infected mother,
- \* Persons who have sex with an infected person or multiple partners,

- \* IV drug users,
- \* Emergency responders and healthcare workers,
- \* Homosexual men, or
- \* Patients with kidney disease who are required to undergo blood filtration.

## What if I am pregnant?

Your baby can get infected with HBV during birth, but this can be prevented.



- \* Make sure that your baby gets a shot called hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) and the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine within 12 hours of birth,
- \* Ask your doctor when your baby should get the next doses of hepatitis B vaccine, and
- \* Your baby should get a blood test after the vaccine series is completed to be sure he/she is protected.

**It is okay for you to breastfeed your baby. Be sure to take care of your nipple to prevent cracking and bleeding.**

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## Special Points of Interest

### DID YOU KNOW?

The Hepatitis B virus is 100 times more contagious than HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

## TIPS: Preventing Hepatitis B

- \* **Get Vaccinated!!!**
- \* Practice safer sex.
- \* Do not share anything that might have blood on it. This includes drugs, needles, razors or toothbrushes.
- \* Handle needles and sharp items safely.

You can also help prevent others from getting infected with hepatitis B by:

- \* Proper use of a latex condom every time you have sex,
- \* Cover your cuts and open sores,

- \* Do not share anything that might have blood on it, such as a toothbrush or razor,
- \* Do not donate your blood,



body organs, other tissues or sperm, and

- \* Clean blood spills with a fresh mixture of 1 part household bleach to 9 parts cold water.

## CURRENT NEWS

### RESPIRATORY SYNCTICAL VIRUS (RSV)

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is the most common cause of bronchiolitis and pneumonia among infants and children under 1 year of age. Illness begins most frequently with fever, runny nose, cough, and sometimes wheezing. During their first RSV infection, between 25% and 40% of infants and young children have signs or symptoms of bronchiolitis or pneumonia, and 0.5% to 2% require hospitalization. Most children recover from illness in 8 to 15 days. The majority of children hospitalized for RSV infection are under 6 months of age. For children with mild disease, no specific treatment is necessary other than the treatment of symptoms. Children with severe disease may require oxygen therapy and sometimes mechanical ventilation.

The Tulsa Health Department collects Emergency Room chief complaint data to monitor the emergence of illnesses, such as influenza, in our community. For additional information on THD's county-wide surveillance system please [click here](#)

## REPORTED CASES OF SELECTED DISEASES

Disease	Tulsa County		Oklahoma	
	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2007	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2006	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2007	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2006
<i>Campylobacter</i>	40	40	460	383
<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7	3	6	14	36
<i>Giardia</i>	18	23	132	159
Hepatitis A	3	4	11	10
Hepatitis B	87	50	205	143
Hepatitis C	346	344	1,681	1,740
Rabies (Animal)	1	2	77	64
Salmonella	63	76	605	577
Shigella	50	15	125	190

Discrepancies between state and county numbers may result from cases being reported directly to the county. Also, Tulsa County totals for Hepatitis B includes perinatal cases.

## Surveillance Report

