

July 2021

World Hepatitis Day, July 28th: World Hepatitis Day brings the world together under a single theme to raise awareness of the global burden of viral hepatitis and to influence real change. The theme for 2021 is “Hepatitis Can’t Wait.”



Hepatitis B, just the facts

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver. The disease can be chronic or acute.

HBV affects 850,000 with 21,000 new infections each year.

Hepatitis viruses are transmitted in different ways:

- Contact with infected body fluids;
- Contaminated injection drug needles;
- Sharing of personal items with someone who has hepatitis (toothbrush, razors, etc.);
- Sexual contact with someone who has hepatitis; or
- Close personal contact, living in a household with someone who has hepatitis.

Some groups of people are at a higher risk for hepatitis:

- International travelers, especially those who travel to Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe;
- Those who use drugs, especially injection drugs;
- Those who live with someone who has chronic hepatitis;
- People who have multiple sexual partners, or have sex with someone who has hepatitis;
- Men who have sex with men; and
- Workers who come in contact with blood, stool, or other bodily fluids.

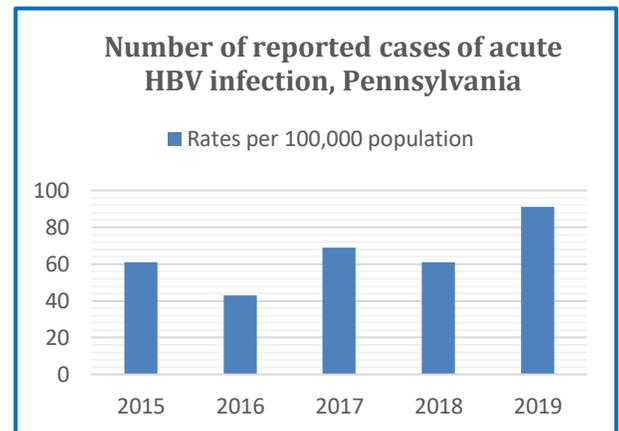
Symptoms of hepatitis may include:

fatigue	jaundice
fever	dark urine
nausea	light-colored stool
vomiting	abdominal pain
joint pain	loss of appetite

Caring for your adult patients

Complications: *An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!*

- Scarring of the liver (cirrhosis)
- Liver cancer and liver failure- HBV is the second most common carcinogen after tobacco
 - ✓ Causes 50 to 60 percent of all primary liver cancers worldwide
- Other conditions- chronic HBV patients can develop kidney disease or vasculitis



As shown in this graph, it's evident that acute Hepatitis B infections are on the increase! →

In addition, surveillance data indicate the following concerning issues:

- Pennsylvania has the 4th highest newly reported chronic cases in the nation.
- Philadelphia accounts for 74% (n=865) of Pennsylvania's 1,164 cases.
- Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), the primary form of liver cancer, continues to increase every year in both sexes, and in both incidence and mortality.
- HBV is highly infectious - 100 times more infectious than HIV.

Vaccinating your adult patients

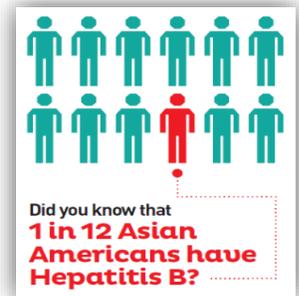
The following groups should routinely be screened for HBV vaccine:

- People at risk for infection by sexual exposure
- People at risk for infection by percutaneous or mucosal exposure to blood
- International travelers to countries with high or intermediate levels of endemic hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection (HBsAg prevalence of ≥2%)
- People with hepatitis C virus infection
- People with chronic liver disease
- People with HIV infection
- People who are incarcerated
- All other people seeking protection from HBV infection

Pay attention to health disparities with Hepatitis B infections; culture and language barriers present unique challenges!

Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders (AAPI) carry 50 percent of chronic hepatitis burden in the U.S.

Among AAPI and foreign-born African community studies, we see infection rates of 4 - 15 percent. AAPI and African communities also face HBV-mortality rates that are six times higher compared to others.



What are the hepatitis B vaccines licensed for use in the United States?

Three single-antigen vaccines and two combination vaccines are currently licensed in the United States.

Single-antigen hepatitis B vaccines

ENGERIX-B®

RECOMBIVAX HB®

HEPLISAV-B™

Combination vaccine

TWINRIX®: Combined Hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccine. Recommended for people aged 18 years or older who are at increased risk for both HAV and HBV infections.

For the complete vaccine schedule, please click the following link:

[Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule for ages 19 years or older, United States, 2021 *](#)

*Please scroll down to 'Hepatitis B vaccination'

Provider Resources for your practice:

- ✓ CDC's Know Hepatitis B Campaign: <https://www.cdc.gov/knowhepatitisb/materials.htm>
(Provides vaccine cards along with multi-lingual fact sheets)
- ✓ Hepatitis B Foundation: www.hepb.org
- ✓ **Learn more about hepatitis B with online trainings and podcasts, available from the Hepatitis B Foundation.** Each training session includes one case discussion and a 15-minute didactic aimed to empower providers to manage hepatitis B. **All presentations are recorded and can be accessed at this link:**
<https://www.hepb.org/resources-and-support/online-training/>

Please add the Adult Vaccine Program email to your address book: RA-DHIMMUNIZE@pa.gov