



## HEPATITIS B

### What is Hepatitis B?

- Hepatitis B is an infection of the liver caused by the Hepatitis B virus

### What are symptoms that could occur?

- 30% of people infected have no symptoms
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain
- Fatigue
- Nausea/diarrhea
- Joint pain
- Swelling and tenderness of the liver
- Yellowing of skin and eyes
- Dark urine, light colored stools
- Fever

### How is it spread?

- When blood or body fluids enter a person through:
  - sexual activity
  - using intravenous drug use (sharing needles)
  - needle sticks or work exposure
  - unborn babies from infected mother
- Symptoms begin between six weeks to six months after exposure with an average of 2-3 months
- People are contagious several weeks before symptoms appear and while the virus is in their body

### How is it diagnosed and treated?

- Primary care provider evaluation and laboratory testing
- Treatment is aimed at relief of symptoms

### How can Hepatitis B be prevented?

- Immunization with Hepatitis B vaccine is effective prevention, requires a 3 dose series with specific spacing
- Post exposure: HBIG administration from medical provider and hepatitis B vaccine
- Practice safe sex
- Don't share needles

### Are there complications?

- 90% of people infected recover without complications
- 10% remain carriers of the virus over their lifetime and are called carriers, therefore remain infectious
- Carriers can develop cirrhosis of the liver or liver cancer

### Should the sick child be isolated?

- No

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**When can the child return to day care or school?**

- There is no need to exclude a child from attending school.

**Should schools do special cleaning?**

- Special cleaning is not necessary. Routine cleaning with EPA approved products is recommended.

**If I have any other questions, whom can I contact?**

- Call the Genesee County Health Department at 257-3612

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, call your health care provider.

5/27/2004