

Hepatitis B Information for Pregnant Women

What is hepatitis B?

- Hepatitis B is a liver disease caused by a virus. For many people who get hepatitis B, the virus stays in the body, causing a lifelong illness.
- Hepatitis B can cause serious health problems over time, including liver damage, liver failure, and liver cancer.
- Most people who have hepatitis B have no symptoms and may not know they have it. But they can still pass hepatitis B to others.

Why should pregnant women get tested?

- If a pregnant woman tests positive for hepatitis B, her baby must be treated at birth. Babies who get treatment when they are born rarely get hepatitis B.
- When babies become infected with hepatitis B they are very likely to develop a lifelong infection.
- Pregnant women should be tested for hepatitis B during every pregnancy.

What should you do if you have hepatitis B and are pregnant?

- See your health care provider to discuss how to manage your hepatitis B infection.
- There are treatments available that can reduce the risk of passing hepatitis B on to your baby.
- If you don't know if you have hepatitis B, ask your provider to order a blood test for hepatitis B.

How can you protect your baby from getting infected?

- Get tested for hepatitis B during every pregnancy.
- If you test negative for hepatitis B, ask your provider about hepatitis B vaccination.
- If you test positive for hepatitis B, your baby will need treatment and follow up:
 - Your baby will receive the first dose of the vaccine series and hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) after birth.
 - Your baby will need to finish the hepatitis B vaccine series.
 - After the vaccine series, your doctor will draw blood to make sure your baby is protected from hepatitis B.
- It is safe to breastfeed even if you have hepatitis B.



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To obtain this information in a different format, call:
651-201-5414.