

# Hepatitis B Information for Pregnant Persons

## 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 it to others.
- Pregnant people should be tested for hepatitis B during every pregnancy.

## Why should pregnant persons get tested?

- If a pregnant person tests positive for hepatitis B, their 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.

## 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.

## How can you protect your baby from getting infected?

- If you don't know if you have hepatitis B, ask your provider to order a blood test for hepatitis B.
- 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.

