



## Hepatitis B Vaccine

### What is Hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a virus that infects your blood and can permanently damage your liver. It is the most common cause of liver cancer. There are about 150 cases of Hepatitis B reported in Ontario each year.

Why should I be worried about Hepatitis B infection?

Hepatitis B is spread through contact with blood or bodily fluids from an infected person. It can be spread by: sharing items (like toothbrushes, razors, or nail clippers), body or ear piercing, tattoo equipment that has not been cleaned properly, intimate contact, or sharing needles. An infected mother can also pass it to her baby at birth.

People with Hepatitis B may be infected with the virus and not even know it. This means they can pass the virus to you and not know it.

### How can I protect myself from Hepatitis B?

There is no cure for Hepatitis B, but you can protect yourself by getting immunized. The immunization series is 95-100% effective against Hepatitis B.

### How safe is the immunization?

Hepatitis B immunization is safe. It has been approved by Health Canada and recommended for use by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization. Before obtaining approval for use in Canada, the immunization went through rigorous testing and evaluation.

It is not possible to become infected with Hepatitis B from the vaccine.

### What if I choose not to get protected against Hepatitis B?

If you choose not to be immunized, you are at risk of being infected with the virus. Hepatitis B immunization is not required to attend school, however, it is strongly recommended that all students receive the immunization. Many colleges, universities, work placements, and humanitarian missions require proof of Hepatitis B immunization for admission. The immunization is available from Public Health at elementary school clinics for no cost.

### What are the side effects of the immunization?

Hepatitis B immunization has side effects similar to all other injections, such as redness, tenderness, and swelling at the injection site. Less commonly, dizziness, nausea, headache, and fever may occur. Severe allergic reactions are extremely rare. Nurses give the immunizations and monitor students for any reactions.

### How can I get ready for the clinic?



Talk about the vaccine with your parents.



Complete and return the consent form.



Review helpful ways to deal with fear or anxiety (count to ten, look away from needle, focus on breathing).



Eat a healthy breakfast and lunch.



Wear short sleeves or a loose fitting top.

Public Health will be in the schools several times per school year. If you missed the vaccine, you can get it at the next school clinic.



Risks of Hepatitis B Infection	Risks of Hepatitis B Vaccine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hep B Infection: Nearly 5 in 100 children</li> <li>• Illness (acute Hep B): About 1 in 10 infected children</li> <li>• Up to 9 in 10 infected children have no symptoms but can infect others</li> <li>• About 1 in 10 infected people over the age of 5 years will develop Chronic Hep B</li> <li>• Death: In up to 2 in 100 people with acute Hep B and up to 1 in 4 people with chronic Hep B</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sore arm in up to 3 in 10 people</li> <li>• Fever in up to 6 in 100 people</li> <li>• Serious reaction is EXTREMELY RARE</li> <li>• Death: Zero</li> </ul>

Hepatitis B immunization contents	Where else are they found?
Aluminum	Vegetables, cereal, deodorant
Sodium chloride	Human body, table salt
Sodium borate	Water, soil
Yeast	Human body, bread, bagels
Formaldehyde	Human body, fruits, fish



For any questions, contact the Grey Bruce Public Health:  
519-376-9420, press '2' or 1-800-263-3456, press '2'

[www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](http://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca)

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