

doctor if Hepatitis B tests are needed. After delivery, make sure that your baby gets a vaccine shot within the first 12 hours of birth.

**For more information please visit:**

[http://www.hepb.org/learning\\_guide/](http://www.hepb.org/learning_guide/)

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis/b/fact.htm>

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs204/en/>

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**US Committee for Refugees  
and Immigrants**  
1717 Massachusetts Ave, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: 202-347-3507  
Fax: 202-347-3418  
[www.refugees.org](http://www.refugees.org)



## What is Hepatitis B?



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## WHAT IS HEPATITIS B?

Hepatitis B is a disease that is caused by a virus and impacts the liver. It can lead to a loss of appetite, tiredness, diarrhea, vomiting, pain in the muscles and stomach, and jaundice, which is the yellowing of skin and eyes. If left untreated, it could lead to liver damage, liver cancer, or death. About 30% of persons with Hepatitis B have no signs of sickness. The disease is more common in adults than children.

## HOW IS HEPATITIS B SPREAD?

Hepatitis B occurs when blood from a person with Hepatitis B enters the body of a person who does not have Hepatitis B. This happens through having sex with an infected person without using a condom, by sharing drugs and needles, or from an infected mother to her baby during birth.

You cannot get Hepatitis B from:

- kissing or hugging,
- sneezing or coughing,
- breastfeeding,
- sharing food or water,
- casual contact,
- sharing silverware, or glasses.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HEPATITIS B?

The symptoms of Hepatitis B may include:

- weakness and tiredness,
- loss of appetite,
- nausea or vomiting,
- diarrhea or constipation,
- dark urine,
- fever,
- headache,
- itchy skin,
- joint pain, and rashes.

## HOW CAN I PREVENT HEPATITIS B FROM SPREADING TO OTHERS?

Ways to reduce the risks of getting infected with Hepatitis B:

- Always use condoms.
- Do not share needles or use illegal drugs.
- Do not share personal care items that could have blood on them, such as toothbrushes, razors, etc.
- If you have or have had Hepatitis B, do not donate blood, organs, or tissue.
- If you do not have Hepatitis B, make sure you and your family members get vaccinated.

## WHY SHOULD I GET MY CHILDREN VACCINATED FOR HEPATITIS B?

The Hepatitis B vaccine is the most effective way to prevent the disease. Medical, scientific, and public health communities say that the Hepatitis B vaccine is a safe way to prevent the disease in infants, children, and adults. The vaccine comes in several shots. If given to infants, the first shot should be given at birth, the second shot is given at 1-4 months of age, and the last shot should be given at 6-18 months of age.

A Hepatitis B vaccination should be given to those who:

- are under 19 years of age,
- have family members with Hep B,
- are sexually active,
- recently had a sexually-transmitted disease,
- live with someone who has long-lasting Hepatitis B, or
- have a job that exposes them to human blood.

## CAN I INFECT MY BABY IF I AM PREGNANT?

If you are pregnant, you can infect your baby with Hepatitis B. Ask your