

Thursday, 03 August 2023

[Health Protection](#)



**Hepatitis B**  
**Factsheet for patients**

**What is hepatitis B?**  
Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver. There are several different viruses which cause hepatitis, and hepatitis B is one of these.

**What are the symptoms of hepatitis B?**  
Many people never have any symptoms of acute hepatitis B, but if there are any, symptoms will appear between six weeks and six months after being infected. Some adults notice a short flu-like illness which may not be diagnosed as hepatitis B. More serious symptoms such as vomiting, tummy pain and yellow jaundice may occur, and will need treatment from a doctor. Rarely, acute infection causes a very severe illness which can lead to death.

**Acute and chronic hepatitis B**  
Hepatitis B can cause an acute or a chronic illness.  
An acute illness is one that gets better quite quickly, usually within weeks or at most a few months.

Most adults recover fully from acute hepatitis B, normally within six months.

Chronic hepatitis B is hepatitis B which lasts longer than six months. Some people with chronic hepatitis B remain healthy but about a quarter will develop long-term liver disease. Most are infectious and must take precautions to avoid passing on the virus (see below).

**How do you get hepatitis B?**  
In this country, in Europe and in North America, hepatitis B is mainly passed from person to person through unprotected sex. Worldwide, most people get hepatitis B by contact with infected blood, especially when babies are born to infected mothers and are not vaccinated immediately after birth.

**Sex**  
Hepatitis B can be passed on during unprotected sex with an infected person. If you are concerned about sexually-transmitted disease, you can get confidential advice from the Sexual health/Genitourinary Medicine (GUM) clinics listed at the end of this leaflet.

Factsheet for patients who have tested positive for the hepatitis B virus.

The factsheet is only available by contacting the Duty Room on **0300 555 0119**. Some of the translations below are based on a previous version of this factsheet.

## Details

Format

4 page A5

Target group

Patients who have tested positive for the hepatitis B virus.

## Downloads

<b>Attachment</b>	<b>Size</b>
<a href="#">Hep B factsheet for patients English</a>	419.5 KB
<a href="#">Hep B factsheet for patients Arabic</a>	323.34 KB
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