

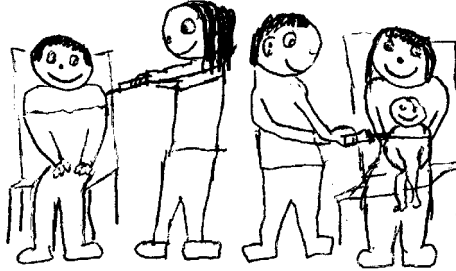
Why does my baby need so many vaccinations?

It's true that little babies get lots of injections, which can cause temporary discomfort. But without these vaccines your baby is not protected against measles, mumps, diphtheria, rubella, and other preventable diseases. Like hepatitis B, many of these diseases can result in severe illness, hospitalization, and even death.

Make sure all your children get all their vaccinations on time. Children are our future—protect them!

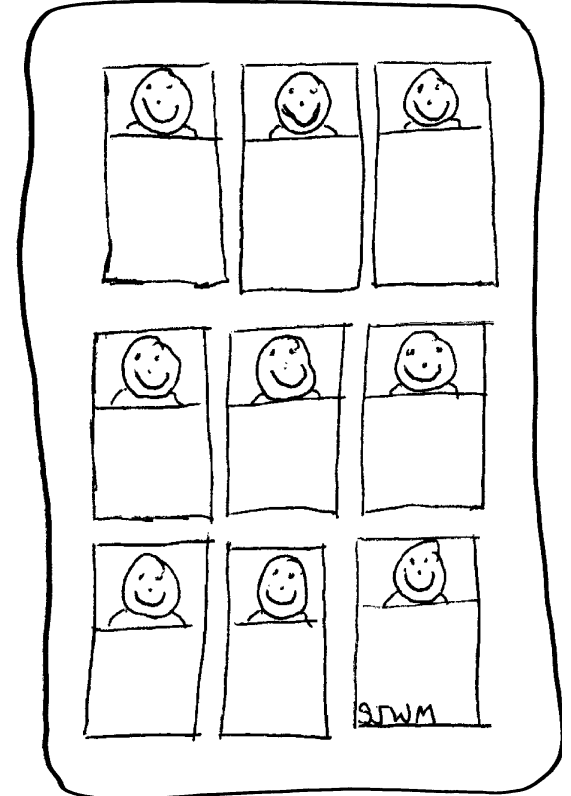
Everyone needs vaccinations!

If you can't afford a clinic visit, contact your city or county health department.



For more information about hepatitis B, contact your health care provider or local health department, or call CDC's National Immunization Information Hotline at (800) 232-2522, or visit IAC's website at: www.vaccineinformation.org

Hepatitis B shots are recommended for all new babies



Hepatitis B vaccine helps protect your baby's future!



Immunization Action Coalition

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The Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) encourages you to make and distribute copies of this brochure. If you alter it, please acknowledge that it was adapted from IAC. This brochure was reviewed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for technical accuracy.

Who says my baby needs hepatitis B vaccination?

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) all recommend that every baby born in the United States be vaccinated against hepatitis B. These are the same medical groups that recommend your baby get vaccinated against measles, tetanus, polio, and other serious diseases.

What is hepatitis B?

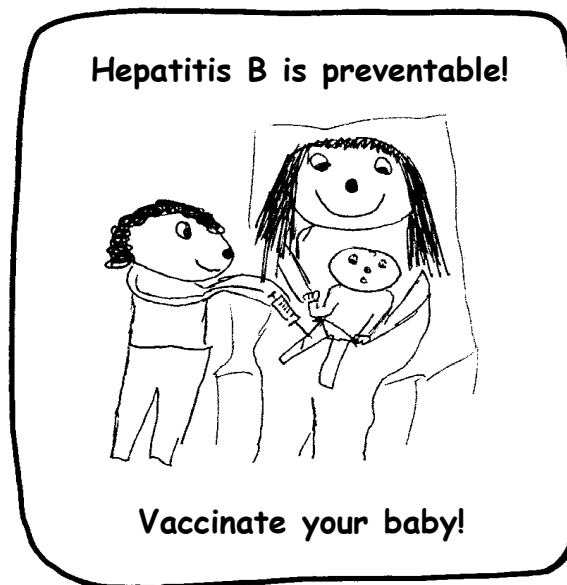
Hepatitis B is a serious liver disease caused by a virus. This virus enters the bloodstream and attacks the liver. When infants and young children are infected, the virus often remains in the body for decades and causes ongoing liver damage, including liver failure and liver cancer. Fortunately, a vaccine can prevent this very serious disease. In fact, hepatitis B vaccine is the first anti-cancer vaccine.

How is hepatitis B virus spread?

Hepatitis B virus is spread by contact with the blood or other body fluids of an infected person. An infected mother can transmit this disease to her baby at the time of birth; children can acquire hepatitis B on playgrounds or in contact sports; adults transmit hepatitis B virus through sexual activity; health care workers are at risk for hepatitis B when they are exposed to blood. The fact is, anyone can become infected with the virus.

Why does my baby need hepatitis B shots now?

Hepatitis B vaccine is an investment in your baby's future. This vaccine protects babies from a disease that they may come in contact with at any time in life. Studies show the vaccine offers protection that lasts at least 15 years.



How many people get hepatitis B?

About 5% of people in the U.S. will get infected with the hepatitis B virus sometime during their lives. In the U.S., more than one million people carry the virus in their blood; worldwide, 360 million people are chronically infected. About 5,000 Americans die from hepatitis B-related liver failure or liver cancer every year.

How many injections are needed to protect my baby?

Three or four. The first dose is usually given shortly after birth, before your baby leaves the hospital. The second dose is given one to two months later, and the third, usually at six months of age. Four doses are needed if your baby's health care provider uses a combination vaccine for the later doses, as combination vaccines cannot be given at birth.

There is flexibility in the timing of the dosing schedule. If your child is late getting a dose, just continue where you left off—you don't need to restart the series!

What about my older children?

It's best to start vaccination in infancy so your child is protected as soon as possible. However, better late than never! Hepatitis B vaccination is recommended for all children and teens 0–18 years of age. Make sure your older children are protected as they enter the higher-risk years. Ask your doctor to vaccinate your older children now if they haven't received this important vaccine already.

Is this vaccine safe?

Hepatitis B vaccine has been shown to be very safe when given to infants, children, and adults. More than 1 billion doses of hepatitis B vaccine have been given worldwide. In the U.S., more than 30 million adults and 40 million infants and children have received this vaccine. The most common side effects from the vaccine are soreness at the injection site and mild to moderate fever. Serious side effects are rare.