



PHARMACY TECHNICIAN

POCKET GUIDE:

HEPATITIS B VACCINE

Important facts about hepatitis B¹

- Hepatitis B is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus. Some people with hepatitis B are sick for only a few weeks (known as “acute” infection), but for others, the disease progresses to a serious, lifelong illness known as chronic hepatitis B
- For some people, acute hepatitis B leads to life-long infection known as chronic hepatitis B. Over time, chronic hepatitis B can cause serious health problems, including liver damage, cirrhosis, liver cancer, and even death

If the patients meet any of the criteria listed in the section below, refer them to the pharmacist to discuss hepatitis B vaccination.

Who should be vaccinated?

General Recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)^{2,3}:

- People who want protection from hepatitis B
- International travelers to regions with increased rates of hepatitis B
- People with chronic liver disease
- People with HIV infection
- People with diabetes: Unvaccinated adults with diabetes who are younger than 60 years of age should be vaccinated as soon as possible after diagnosis. Adults with diabetes who are 60 years of age or older should be vaccinated based on clinical decision making³
- Dialysis or pre-dialysis patients
- Certain healthcare workers

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Who should be vaccinated? (cont'd)

- Recent or current users of injection drugs
- Sexually at-risk persons
- Incarcerated persons

Please refer to the CDC for complete hepatitis B vaccination recommendations.

Who should not be vaccinated?⁴

Do not give the hepatitis B vaccine if your patient:

- Has ever had a severe allergic reaction (eg, anaphylaxis) after a dose of hepatitis B vaccine, or has a severe allergy to any part of the vaccine
- Has a moderate or severe acute illness. Vaccination should be deferred until the person's condition has improved

Refer to the prescribing information for each vaccine product for full warnings and precautions.

References:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hepatitis B questions and answers for the public. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hbv/bfaq.htm>. Reviewed July 28, 2020. Accessed July 1, 2021.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule, United States, 2021. Accessed July 7, 2021.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Diabetes and hepatitis B vaccination. https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/pdf/hepb_vaccination.pdf. October 2012. Accessed July 7, 2021.
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Epidemiology and prevention of vaccine-preventable diseases. Hamborsky J, Kroger A, Wolfe S, eds. 13th ed. Washington D.C. Public Health Foundation, 2015. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/index.html>. Reviewed April 15, 2019. Accessed July 7, 2021.



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