

Hepatitis B Vaccine for Adults with Diabetes

What is Hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a liver disease that results from infection with the hepatitis B virus (known as HBV).

The disease can be chronic (lasting more than 6 months) or acute (lasting only a few weeks). If left untreated, acute hepatitis B can turn into chronic hepatitis B. This can lead to liver cancer or liver disease.

Hepatitis B is usually spread when blood or other body fluids from a person with hepatitis B enters the body of someone who is not infected. Hepatitis B can be spread:

- through sharing needles, syringes, toothbrushes or razors
- through sexual contact
- from an infected mother to her baby during childbirth.

How is Hepatitis B Connected to Diabetes?

Anyone can get hepatitis B, but people who have diabetes are at a greater risk for developing the disease if they share blood glucose meters, fingerstick devices or other diabetes-care equipment such as syringes or insulin pens.

Reduce your risk by not sharing equipment such as glucose monitors or other diabetes care equipment.

What are the Hepatitis B Symptoms?

Hepatitis B symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- fatigue (tiredness)
- yellowing of the eyes or skin
- loss of appetite
- diarrhea (loose stools)
- nausea (upset stomach) and vomiting (throwing up)
- pain in your muscles, joints or stomach.

It is possible that you may not have any symptoms at all.

When is the Hepatitis B Vaccine recommended?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that all adults with diabetes (types 1 and 2) ages 19 to 59 receive the hepatitis B vaccine.

The Hepatitis B vaccine is given as a series of 3 shots over a period of 6 months. The entire series is needed for long-term protection.

What are the Hepatitis B Vaccine Side Effects?

The most common side effects include:

- soreness at the injection site
- a temperature of 99.9 F or higher.

Severe problems or reactions are rare.

Is the Hepatitis B Vaccine Covered by Insurance?

The cost of the hepatitis B vaccine may be covered by your insurance provider. Please call your insurance provider to find out exactly what is and isn't covered under your plan, and how much you have to pay yourself.