

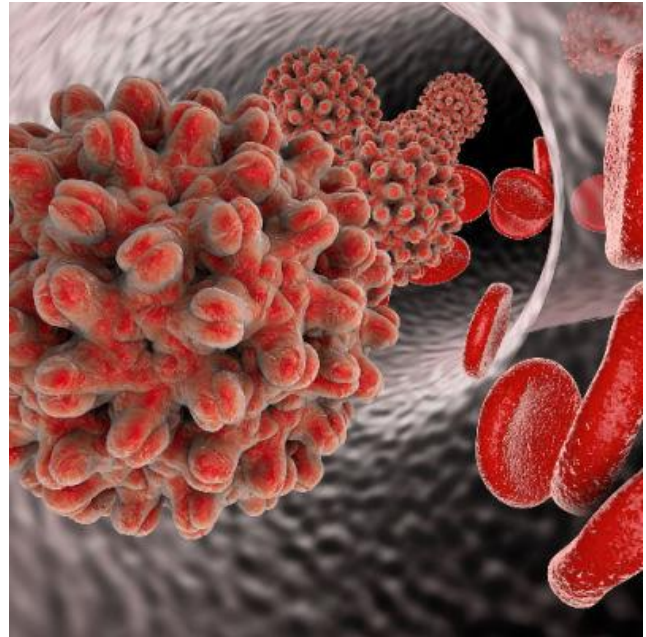
What is Hepatitis B?

OVERVIEW

Hepatitis B is an inflammatory liver disease that is caused by infection with the hepatitis B virus or HBV. It is one of the leading causes of liver cancer around the world, which, fortunately, can be prevented by vaccination.

For most people with hepatitis B, they do not experience symptoms even in the acute stage or remain asymptomatic. However, for others, they do experience symptoms, including:

- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Changes to urine color; darker
- Yellowing of eyes



What is Chronic Hepatitis B?

People with acute hepatitis B whose bodies are unable to clear the hepatitis B virus from their bodies will eventually develop chronic hepatitis B. This is a lifelong condition that can ultimately lead to cirrhosis and liver cancer.

According to Stanford Medicine, approximately 1 in 30 people globally have chronic hepatitis B, resulting in approximately 60% of worldwide liver cancer cases.

In the United States, Asian Americans are more likely to get infected and develop chronic hepatitis B—every 1 in 12.

What are the Causes of Hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B can be transmitted in several ways:

- Through birth; one of the most common modes of transmission that occurs silently, especially if you do not have symptoms of hepatitis B
- Infected blood
- Sharing or re-using of needles for drug use, tattooing, piercings, or acupuncture
- Razors or toothbrushes with blood contamination
- Unprotected sex

Treatment for Chronic Hepatitis B is Safe When Performed by a Board-Certified Gastroenterologist

An accurate diagnosis of hepatitis B after exposure or in the acute stage is key to preventing it from turning chronic. A gastroenterologist can help.

Diagnosis for hepatitis B includes:

- Physical exams to check your eyes
- Blood tests to check for liver enzyme levels
- Liver ultrasound

Vaccination for hepatitis B and a shot of hepatitis B immune globulin will help boost your immune system and fight off the viral infection. If your symptoms of disease last longer than six months, you have chronic hepatitis B. As a result, your gastroenterologist may prescribe:

- Medications such as Hepsera and Baraclude
- Antiviral medications