

## Treating Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)



Acute hepatitis B symptoms usually go away. You can be treated for hepatitis B. But there is very rarely a cure. Follow your healthcare provider's instructions for follow-up to be sure the virus is gone from your blood. If you develop long-term (chronic) hepatitis B, you can help your body fight it. Your provider may tell you to follow these guidelines:

### Don't take most over-the-counter pain medicines

If you have cirrhosis (end-stage liver disease) from hepatitis B, don't take aspirin, ibuprofen, or naproxen. If taking acetaminophen, don't take more than 2 grams (2000 mgs) a day. Always ask your provider before taking any medicines. Some can do more harm to your liver.

### Don't drink alcohol

It may do more harm to your liver. All types of alcoholic beverages can be harmful to the liver. Even small amounts of alcohol can cause damage in someone who has hepatitis B.

### Eat a balanced diet

A diet low in fat, high in fiber, and full of fresh fruits and vegetables helps you stay healthy. Stay at a normal weight. Treat any other health conditions you have, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes, because these can make your liver disease worse.

### Keep your appointments



Going to checkups with your provider helps keep a close watch on your liver. If you are pregnant, your provider will check for hepatitis B. They will discuss treatment to reduce the chance you will pass the disease to your baby.

### Get treatment if your healthcare provider tells you to

Usually, no medicine is used to treat an acute infection. But if you have chronic hepatitis B, your healthcare provider may give you medicine to treat it. The medicines are called antiviral medicines. Your provider will watch your infection to see if it's getting worse. They will also watch to see if you have any liver damage. Sometimes the medicines must be taken for years. In some cases, treatment is not advised. Instead, you will be followed closely to see if your condition changes and needs treatment in the future. You may need other tests, such as labs and imaging tests, if you have cirrhosis.

## Use a condom when having sex

This is to prevent passing the disease on to someone else. Also let your partner know you have hepatitis. HBV is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). This means it can be passed on to other people through sex. It can also be transmitted through drug use by sharing needles, straws, and other drug equipment. The disease can also be prevented by getting a vaccine.

## Be informed

Stay in touch with your healthcare provider. Make sure anyone you have close contact with sees a provider for testing, vaccines, and counseling. Help tell others about how HBV is spread. The more people know about hepatitis B, the easier it is to prevent its spread.

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