

Treatment:

For most people living with chronic hepatitis B, there is **antiviral treatment available**. While it doesn't cure the virus, it helps control it and protect the liver from damage.

Treatment can **lower the amount of virus in the body**, which helps prevent serious problems like liver scarring (cirrhosis), liver failure, and liver cancer. It can also improve liver function.

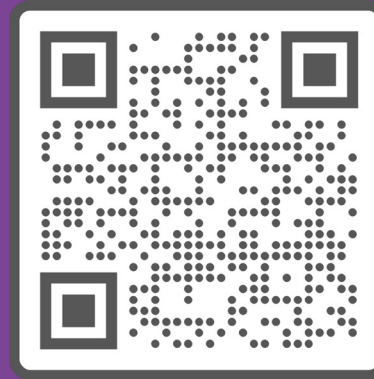
Not everyone needs treatment right away. Some people with low levels of the virus may not be treated but will still need regular check-ups.

This usually includes **blood tests and FibroScans** (a type of liver scan) to monitor how the virus is affecting the liver over time.

Vaccination:

You can get vaccinated for hepatitis B if you are at risk. It is normally given as 3 or more injections in the arm and there is **no risk of getting the hepatitis B virus from the vaccination**. Having the vaccine also prevents you from getting hepatitis D.

Find Out More About Hepatitis B and D:



Please note, this QR code leads to the Hep C U Later website.

Support:

Hep B Companion is a non-profit peer led organisation which advocates for people affected by hepatitis B. Their website hosts a wide range of information about hepatitis B, and resources people can use to help them get the support, treatment and care they deserve.

Visit the Hep B Companion website: [Home - HepB Companion](#) or scan the QR code:



Please note, this QR code leads to the Hep B Companion website.

Hepatitis B

What you need to know



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What is Hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a virus that **spreads through blood and bodily fluids**. One common way it spreads is from mother to baby during birth.

If not managed properly, hepatitis B can **cause serious liver disease or even liver cancer**.

Most adults who get hepatitis B will **clear the virus naturally within 6 months** and become immune – this is called an acute infection. But for about **5-10% of adults**, the virus stays in the body long term. This is called a chronic infection, and it may need treatment to help manage it.

There is no cure yet, but testing is available, and there are effective treatments to help protect the liver and reduce the risk of serious health problems.

Viral Hepatitis and HIV:

If a person has come into contact with hepatitis B it is important to test for other forms of viral hepatitis and HIV because some of these viruses can be transmitted in a similar way. Co-infections (having hepatitis B and another form of viral hepatitis or HIV) can lead to increased problems with your liver. If you have hepatitis B make sure you also ask to be tested for other viral hepatitis infections and HIV.

Hepatitis B Risk Factors:



Mother to baby during pregnancy or birth



Blood transfusion prior to 1996



Tattoos or body piercings using unsterile equipment



Sharing drug injecting equipment



Needle stick injury



Un-sterilised medical or dental equipment abroad



Unprotected sex with someone who has hepatitis B (including anal and oral sex)

The virus cannot be passed on by hugging, kissing or sharing food.

The risk of getting hepatitis B is higher in some parts of the world, including:

- Africa
- Asia
- The Middle East
- Parts of South America and eastern Europe

Early Symptoms of Hepatitis B Infection:

Some symptoms of a hepatitis B infection include:

- Headache
- Fever
- Nausea
- Jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin)

However, **50-70% people** are 'asymptomatic', meaning they have no symptoms at all.

Testing:

Testing can be done lots of different ways depending on where you get the test. Most tests will involve taking blood from your arm, however, some tests can be taken from pricking your finger.

Where can I get a test?

- Ask your GP
- At a sexual health clinic
- At a Drug & Alcohol clinic (if you attend one)

Did you know that most people who come into contact with hepatitis B naturally get rid of the virus?