

Hepatitis B Immune Globulin (HBIG)

Immunization protects you from disease. Get protected, get immunized.

- **Immune Globulins are needed for fast but short term protection.**
- **For long term protection, get immunized.**

What is Hepatitis B Immune Globulin (HBIG)?

HBIG is made from blood and contains antibodies to hepatitis B. It gives fast protection but is not long lasting.

When HBIG is given, a hepatitis B vaccine series is started so that the body can make its own antibodies for long lasting protection.

Who should have HBIG?

HBIG may be offered when there is a high risk that an unprotected person may have had contact with the hepatitis B virus (e.g., baby born to mother with hepatitis B infection, needle stick injury).

How many doses of HBIG are needed?

People need 1 dose of HBIG as soon as possible after contact with the virus. The size of the dose depends on the person's body weight.

How well does HBIG work?

HBIG and a dose of hepatitis B vaccine given within 24 hours after birth are 85% to 95% effective in preventing hepatitis B in babies born to mothers with hepatitis B infection.

HBIG and hepatitis B vaccine are very effective when given within 7 days after contact with an infected person's blood or 14 days after sexual contact.

Is HBIG safe?

HBIG is one of the safest blood products available. Canadian Blood Services carefully screens donors and tests all blood collected. The blood of donors is not used if the donor has known risk factors or tests positive for an infectious disease. HBIG is treated with heat and chemicals to kill germs that might be present. The risk of getting an infection from HBIG is very small.

Where can I get HBIG?

HBIG is given at the hospital to babies born to mothers with hepatitis B infection.

If you think you have been in contact with the hepatitis B virus, call Health Link at 811. If HBIG and hepatitis B vaccine are needed, they will be given at your local public health office or hospital.

It is important to finish all doses of hepatitis B vaccine and any follow-up blood tests as recommended by your healthcare provider.

Are there side effects from HBIG?

There can be side effects from HBIG, but they tend to be mild and go away in a few days. Side effects may include:

- feeling sore where you had the needle
- feeling unwell
- headache
- fever
- body aches
- feeling sick to your stomach (nausea) or loose stool (diarrhea)

Hives and general swelling may occur.

It is important to stay for 15 minutes after you have HBIG. Some people may have a rare but serious allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. If anaphylaxis happens, you will get medicine to treat the symptoms.

It is rare to have a serious side effect. Call Health Link at 811 to report any serious or unusual side effects.

How can I manage side effects?

- To help with soreness and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area where you had the needle.
- There is medicine to help with fever or pain. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure what medicine or dosage to take. Follow the directions on the package.
- Children under the age of 18 years should **not** take aspirin because it can cause serious health problems.
- Some people with health problems, such as a weak immune system, must call their doctor if they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your doctor even if you think the fever is from the vaccine.

Who should not have HBIG?

Talk to your healthcare provider before having HBIG if you:

- have an allergy to parts of the immune globulin
- had a severe or unusual side effect after this immune globulin or one like it
- have an IgA deficiency

Check with your doctor or public health nurse before you get HBIG.

You can still have HBIG if you have a mild illness such as a cold or fever. Always tell your health care provider if you have allergies or if you have had a side effect from an immune globulin in the past.

HBIG can interfere with live vaccines. You need to wait at least 3 months after having HBIG before you can have a live vaccine. If you had a live vaccine less than 14 days before having HBIG, ask a public health nurse if the live vaccine needs to be repeated.

For More Information



Call Health Link at 811



Go to ImmunizeAlberta.ca



Go to MyHealth.Alberta.ca

Facts about hepatitis B

What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is an infection in the liver that is caused by a virus. Symptoms include poor appetite, stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, and yellow skin and eyes (jaundice). Some people do not have any symptoms.

One out of 10 adults who are infected with hepatitis B have an infection that does not go away (called a chronic infection).

- The younger you are, the higher the chance of having a chronic infection. For example, more than 9 out of 10 babies who are infected with hepatitis B will have a chronic infection.
- If you have a chronic hepatitis B infection, you have it forever. You can spread it to others, even if you do not look or feel sick.
- A chronic hepatitis B infection can lead to liver damage (cirrhosis), liver cancer, and death

Each year, 500,000 to 1.2 million people die from hepatitis B-related disease in the world.

Who is most at risk?

Anyone can get hepatitis B. Almost 1 out of 3 people who have it do not have any risk factors.

You have the highest risk if:

- your mother had hepatitis B when you were born
- you live with someone who has a chronic hepatitis B infection
- you are on dialysis
- you live in or travel to countries with high rates of hepatitis B infection
- you have a lifestyle that puts you at risk of the infection (such as having unprotected sex or sharing injection needles)

How does it spread?

Hepatitis B spreads through:

- childbirth (if the mother is infected)
- sharing needles, razors, nail clippers, or toothbrushes
- contact with equipment that is not cleaned properly (such as needles used for tattoos, body piercings, or acupuncture)
- sex
- human bites or open sore