

What if I come into contact with Hepatitis B and am not immunised?

Seek medical attention as soon as possible if you have been at risk from a possible source of infection and you are not immunised. For example, if you have a needlestick injury or have been bitten by someone who may have Hepatitis B, etc.

You should have an injection of immunoglobulin as soon as possible. This contains antibodies against the virus and gives short term protection. You should also start a course of immunisation.

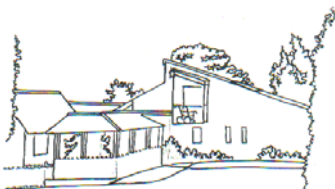
Further information:

⇒ **Information on immunisation**

www.immunisation.org.uk

⇒ **Immunisation Against Infectious Disease (The Green Book)**

www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCareTopics/GreenBook/fs/en

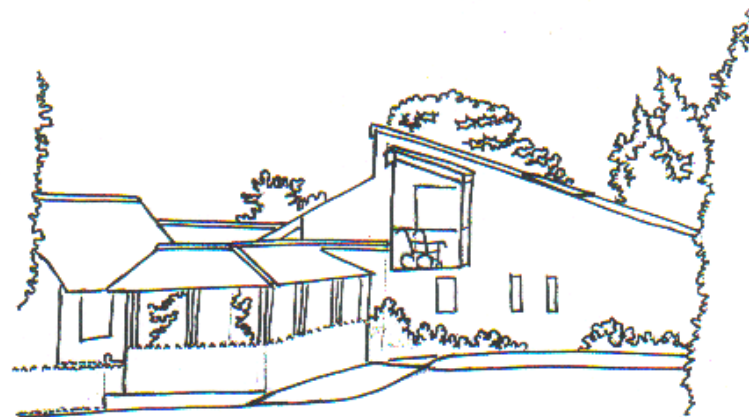


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INFORMATION ON HEPATITIS B IMMUNISATION LAUREL BANK SURGERY MALPAS, CHESHIRE SY14 8PS



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What is Hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a virus passed from person to person by

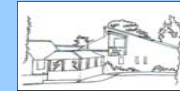
- a. blood to blood contact, i.e. needles or other medical equipment which is contaminated with infected blood, infected blood being spilt onto a wound etc.
- b. having sex with an infected person,
- c. from an infected mother passing it to her baby,
- d. a human bite from an infected person,
- e. people with certain kidney or liver diseases.

In a number of cases the virus remains in the body long-term. These people are called 'carriers'. Some carriers do not have any symptoms but can still pass the virus to other people. About 1 in 4 carriers eventually develop a serious liver disease such as chronic hepatitis, cirrhosis, and in some cases liver cancer develops after a number of years.

Who needs Hepatitis B Immunisation?

Anyone who is at increased risk of being infected with the Hepatitis B virus. These include:

- Workers who are likely to come into contact with blood products, or are at increased risk of needlestick injuries, assault, etc., e.g. nurses, doctors, dentists, medical laboratory workers, prison wardens, etc.
- Staff at day care or residential centres for people with learning disabilities where there is a risk of scratching or biting by residents.
- People who inject street drugs, and their sexual partners and children.
- People who change sexual partners frequently.



- People who live in close contact with someone infected with Hepatitis B., including all prison inmates.
- Families who adopt or foster a child may be offered immunisation when the Hepatitis B status of the child is not known. household visitors and friends are not usually at risk as hepatitis B cannot be caught. However, close regular contacts are best immunised.
- People who regularly receive blood transfusions.
- People who live in residential accommodation for those with learning difficulties. People who attend day centres for people with learning difficulties may also be offered immunisation.
- Travellers to countries where Hepatitis B is common and who place themselves at risk when abroad. (This practice provides a *Travel Clinic* where travellers to countries where Hepatitis B is common can be immunised for a fee.) Risk behaviour includes sexual activity, injecting drug use, undertaking relief work and/or participating in contact sports. Also, if you have a medical or dental procedure in these countries, the procedure may not be done with sterile equipment.

This practice cannot provide the health and safety education specific to your work and workplace. Under Health & Safety legislation your employer, educational body (school, university etc) or Social Services (for adoption cases) has a duty to provide health advice and education using an appropriate risk assessment of the work you do, via their Health & Safety provider.