

Communication Guide: Talking to Your Doctor about Hepatitis B

Are you unsure about which questions to ask your doctor since learning you have hepatitis B? Below is a guide to cover the most important points during your next doctor's visit.

Preparing for your doctor's visit:

- Take a list of questions (see below) with you
- **Bring copies of your previous blood test results**
- If you feel comfortable, invite a friend or family member along for support or if you have a community-based patient navigator, please ask for accompaniment
- **Try to take notes while you talk to the doctor so that you have important information written down. If you have a friend with you, ask them to take notes too.**

Questions to ask your doctor:

- **Could you please explain each hepatitis B blood test result, and any additional test results (ultrasound)? Please make copies of my test results for my own personal files.**
- Where can I get my family, spouse or intimate partner tested and vaccinated for hepatitis B? What do I need to do to protect them until they are completely vaccinated?
- **Am I a good candidate for treatment? If not, why not? If yes, please explain why and tell me about the treatment options.**
- If I am not eligible for medical treatment, what do I need to do to monitor my hepatitis B?
- **Do I need to be regularly screened for liver cancer? If yes, how often?**
- Could you tell me about clinical trials? Do you offer any clinical trials for hepatitis B? If so, could you please explain them to me?
- **For young women: If I want to have children, should I wait to start treatment? If I need to start treatment now, at what point can I consider having children?**
- How will having hepatitis B affect my job or ability to work?
- **How will having hepatitis B affect my health insurance or my ability to get health insurance?**
- Here are the names of the medications that I currently take – are they safe for my liver?
- **What over-the-counter medications or herbal supplements can I safely take for pain, cold symptoms, etc.?**
- Should I be tested for other liver diseases, such as hepatitis C or D?
- **Should I be vaccinated to protect myself against hepatitis A?**
- I am afraid of telling my family about my infection - how should I start the conversation?

A new diagnosis can be scary, but speaking with your doctor about your treatment and care can help your anxiety. Feeling prepared with the right questions can make a big difference. Using this guide can help you feel less intimidated and more comfortable speaking with your doctor about hepatitis B.