

What is Hepatitis D?

Hepatitis D is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis D virus (HDV) that results in the most severe form of viral hepatitis. Only hepatitis B (HBV) patients can contract hepatitis D, and 1 in 20 people with HBV are estimated to be coinfecting with HDV.

Why Should I Test my HBV Patients for HDV?

Hepatitis D can cause more rapid progression to cirrhosis and liver cancer than patients infected with hepatitis B alone. HBV/HDV patients will require different treatment recommendations to manage their co-infection.

Who Should be Tested?

- Patients originating from Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Mongolia, Pakistan or Central Asia
- Patients who are on treatment for HBV but are not responding to treatment or have abnormal liver tests
- Patients with cirrhosis



How Can I Test my Patients?

Start with the HDV antibody test, which is the first step in diagnosing an HBV/HDV coinfection. If the antibody test is positive, this should be followed up with an HDV RNA test to confirm a current infection. Testing is available from:

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), [ARUP Laboratories](#), [Quest Diagnostics](#).

How Can I Manage an HBV/HDV Patient?

Patients are often prescribed pegylated interferon, which is the only current treatment shown to help suppress the hepatitis D infection and help prevent liver damage.