

# Hepatitis B and Community Health

**As a community health worker, you're in a unique position to act as a health guide and trusted source of health information for community members. You can help protect your community by informing people about the risks and protection strategies for hepatitis B.**

**Take pride in empowering community members to take control of their health!**

**Here's information about hepatitis B that you can share with members of your community:**

What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a common virus, affecting 300 million people worldwide. It can either be acute (lasting less than 6 months) or chronic (lasting a lifetime). Most people acquire it as babies or children.

What are the effects of chronic hepatitis B?

Chronic hepatitis B negatively affects the liver, causing liver disease and cancer over time. Often, symptoms take years to appear, so getting tested even without symptoms is important.

Is there a cure for hepatitis B?

Currently, there is no cure and claims of herbal remedies that promise a cure are false.. However, hepatitis B can be managed and individuals living with the virus can live long and healthy lives. There is also a safe and effective hepatitis B vaccine available.

How is hepatitis B transmitted?

Hepatitis B is transmitted in a few ways: Direct blood contact, mother to child during childbirth, sharing household hygiene items (razors, toothbrushes, etc.), sharing needles, healthcare exposure, unprotected sex, tattoos, piercings, barbers, and circumcision

Can hepatitis B be shared through casual contact?

Hepatitis B is NOT transmitted through: Sharing food, sharing water (a cup or toilet), coughing or sneezing, breastfeeding, holding hands, or hugging and kissing

How can community members protect themselves from hepatitis B?

Community members should get tested for hepatitis B and follow management guidelines if they have the virus. For those without hepatitis B, vaccination, practicing safe sex, never touching blood without gloves, and never sharing household hygiene items or needles are good practices for reducing the risk of hepatitis B.

There is stigma around hepatitis B and spreading accurate information is vital.

You have the power to fight the stigma and save lives!

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