

WHAT IS HEPATITIS B?

Hepatitis refers to any disease that inflames the liver, regardless of how it was contracted. HBV is the virus that causes hepatitis B. Chronic hep B infection can lead to liver cirrhosis, liver failure and liver cancer. Worldwide, 60-80% of primary liver cancer is caused by chronic HBV infection.

HOW IS HBV TRANSMITTED?

HBV is transmitted very much like HIV. Blood transfusions, dirty needles, and unprotected sex are ways that you can contract HBV, but usually HBV is passed from mother to child. HBV is not transmitted through air, food, water, breastfeeding, casual contact like kissing, hugging, sharing utensils or dishes.

However, HBV differs from HIV with respect to how long it can live outside the body. HIV is very weak, and can be killed easily. HBV on the other hand is robust, and can survive over 7 days outside the body. Spread of HBV within the household can occur from sharing toothbrushes or razors.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU HAVE HEP B?

Most people who are chronically infected don't realize it until it's too late. Two-thirds of HBV cases don't exhibit any symptoms, making HBV a silent killer in our community. If symptoms do develop, they mirror the flu: fever, fatigue, joint and/or muscle pain, nausea and vomiting. Jaundice may or may not

HEPATITIS B IS PREVENTABLE.

An effective vaccine exists for HBV, the virus that causes Hepatitis B. Getting vaccinated is easy. Talk to your medical provider or find a screening center to find out more.

QUICK FACTS ABOUT HEP B

1 IN 10 A&PIs ARE CHRONICALLY INFECTED WITH HEPATITIS B compared to 1 in 1000 of the general US population

HALF of all people living with chronic Hepatitis B in the US are A&PI

A&PIs make up **HALF** of Hepatitis B related deaths in the U.S.

Among A&PI men living in California, liver cancer ranks as a leading cause of cancer death.

develop. Because it's hard to tell whether or not you have HBV, you should get screened!

HOW DO I GET VACCINATED?

Liver cancer is a costly and long term illness. In most cases, getting screened can be free and quick at community screening centers. If you have private insurance, ask your doctor to include a screening for you during your next blood test. If your tests come back negative, you should consider getting the HBV vaccine. Getting vaccinated requires three shots scheduled over a series of weeks. Newborns should be vaccinated at birth.



Visit www.banyantreeproject.org or call **1-866-5BANYAN** for more information.

The Banyan Tree Project is a national partnership to end the silence and shame surrounding HIV/AIDS in A&PI communities. The Banyan Tree Project is a program of Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center, San Francisco, CA and funded by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.