

EARLY DETECTION IS KEY

Everyone should get tested for HBV because hepatitis B is one of the greatest health threats for Hmong.

» Get tested

Ask your doctor for these blood tests:

Hepatitis B surface antibody (anti-HBs):

Tells if you are protected against HBV.

Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg):

Tells if you have chronic hepatitis B.

Only the HBsAg blood test can tell you if you have chronic hepatitis B.



» Get vaccinated

If both your HBsAg and anti-HBs blood tests are negative, then you are not protected and should get vaccinated. Make sure your baby also gets vaccinated at birth.

The vaccine is so effective at preventing HBV and liver cancer that it is called **“the first anti-cancer vaccine”** by the World Health Organization.

If you are unprotected, get the hepatitis B vaccine (a 3-shot series over 6 months) to protect you for life.

Unite against HBV.



The **Jade Ribbon** is folded like the Chinese character for people “人” to symbolize the united voices of those fighting hepatitis B and liver cancer worldwide.



For more information visit: liver.stanford.edu



**ASIAN LIVER CENTER
AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY**
490 S. CALIFORNIA AVE, SUITE 300
PALO ALTO, CA 94306
TEL: 1-888-311-3331
FAX: (650) 566-8863



ENGLISH-HMONG EDITION
© 2010 ASIAN LIVER CENTER

KNOW HBV

What every Hmong should know
about hepatitis B and liver cancer





BREAKING THE SILENCE ABOUT HBV

» Hepatitis B virus (HBV) is the most common serious infection of the liver, and can lead to a shortened lifespan from liver cancer or liver failure.

» **1 in 5 Hmong are living with chronic (life-long) hepatitis B.**



» Most don't even know that they're infected.

» 1 in 4 people with chronic hepatitis B will die from liver cancer or liver failure, but this can be avoided with appropriate monitoring and treatment.

EVEN IF YOU FEEL HEALTHY, YOU MAY ALREADY BE INFECTED

» Hepatitis B is dangerous because there are often no symptoms.

» By the time symptoms such as stomach pain or jaundice (dark urine and yellowing of the skin or eyes) appear, it is often too late for treatment to be effective.

HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?



1. A mother-to-child infection

For Hmong, HBV is commonly transmitted from an infected mother to her child at birth.



2. A blood-borne infection, for example:

- » Wound-to-wound contact
- » Sharing razors or toothbrushes
- » Reusing needles for tattoos, piercings, or injecting drugs
- » Reusing medical needles or syringes



3. A sexually transmitted infection

HBV can be transmitted through unprotected sex with an infected person.

HBV IS NOT TRANSMITTED THROUGH FOOD AND WATER

It is important to understand that HBV is **NOT** transmitted through:

- » Sharing food and water
- » Sharing utensils or drinking glasses
- » Casual contact
- » Coughing or sneezing
- » Hugging or kissing
- » Breastfeeding

There is no reason to distance yourself from those infected with HBV.

If you have chronic hepatitis B, you should not be excluded from work, school, or other daily activities.

IF I HAVE HBV, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

» Get screened

EVEN THOUGH YOU MAY FEEL HEALTHY, REGULAR SCREENING IS IMPORTANT.

Ask your doctor for the following tests:

Every	Test	Screens for
6 months	ALT blood test	liver damage
	AFP blood test	liver cancer
1 year*	ultrasound	liver cancer

* If you have liver cirrhosis or your family has a history of liver cancer, increase the frequency of your ultrasound exam to every 6 months.

If detected at an early stage, liver cancer can be successfully treated.

» Not everyone who tests positive for HBV needs treatment

But if your blood ALT is high, this means you have liver damage. So, you may start to take anti-viral medicine to prevent HBV from causing more damage. Even though there is no cure for hepatitis B, appropriate treatment can reduce your risk of liver cancer and liver failure. Ask your doctor about FDA-approved treatment for HBV.

» Get the hepatitis A vaccine

» Avoid drinking alcohol

» Protect your loved ones

Make sure your family and partner are tested for HBV and vaccinated if they are not protected.

If you are pregnant, make sure your newborn receives the first shot of the hepatitis B vaccine **and** the hepatitis B immunoglobulin (HBIG) shot at birth. Then complete the hepatitis B vaccine series on time. This will protect your newborn from infection.