

Hepatitis B Vaccine

Vaccine Information Leaflet

What is the Hepatitis B Vaccine Used For?

Hepatitis B vaccines help to prevent infection caused by the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV).

Hepatitis B can lead to serious liver disease, and is spread by direct contact with blood or other body fluids from an infected person. It can also spread by sharing items such as toothbrushes or razors with an infected person. A baby whose mother is infected may become infected at birth unless the necessary vaccines are given.

Common symptoms of Hepatitis B include jaundice (yellowing of skin or eyes), nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and joint pain.

Who Should Receive the Hepatitis B Vaccine?

As part of the Singapore National Childhood Immunisation Schedule (NCIS), all children should receive three doses at appropriate intervals. Infants should get their first dose at birth and will usually complete the series by 6 months of age, however sometimes it may take longer than 6 months to complete the series.

As part of the Singapore National Adult Immunisation Schedule (NAIS), adults (18 years or older) who have not been previously vaccinated, or lack evidence of past infection or immunity should receive three doses (the first dose, followed by the second and third dose at one month and six months after the first dose).

What Precautions Should I Follow Before Receiving the Hepatitis B Vaccine?

Inform your healthcare professional if:

- You are allergic to this vaccine or any of the other ingredients of this vaccine
- You are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding
- You are taking any other medications
- You are currently not feeling well and having a fever
- You have a history of bleeding disorders
- You have a weakened immune system e.g. currently undergoing chemotherapy

How Is the Hepatitis B Vaccine Given?

It is usually given by injection into a muscle, or sometimes under the skin.

It is given as a series of three doses under the NCIS and the NAIS.

Under the NCIS, the Hepatitis B vaccine may be given on its own as one shot, or in combination with other vaccines (e.g. Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio and Hib) as one shot.

A booster dose may be required in certain patients with specific medical conditions such as kidney problems (e.g. on haemodialysis) or a weak immune system.

What Are Some Common Side Effects of the Hepatitis B Vaccine?

- Some people may feel faint after the vaccination
 - Sit for 15 minutes to avoid fainting
- Pain, redness and swelling at the injection site
 - You may place a cold compress over the affected area for relief
 - You may take paracetamol for pain relief
- Headache and fever
 - You may take paracetamol to treat the headache or fever
- Fatigue, dizziness, irritability
 - These side effects usually go away on its own

Please see a doctor if these side effects do not get better or become worse.

What Are Some Rare But Serious Side Effects That I Need to Seek Medical Advice Immediately?

The symptoms of a drug allergy include one or more of the following:

- Swollen face/eyes/lips/tongue
- Difficulty in breathing
- Itchy skin rashes over your whole body

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should inform your healthcare professional immediately.

Disclaimers

The information provided on this page does not replace information from your healthcare professional. Please consult your healthcare professional for more information.

This article is jointly developed by members of the National Medication Information workgroup. The workgroup consists of cluster partners (National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and SingHealth), community pharmacies (Guardian, Unity and Watsons) and Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore. The content does not reflect drug availability and supply information in pharmacies and healthcare institutions. You are advised to check with the respective institutions for such information.

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