

# HEPATITIS B: ARE YOU AT RISK?



## Information for People from Africa

### What is Hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a disease caused by the Hepatitis B virus. It can cause serious health problems over time. The virus can make some people very sick. The disease is very common in many parts of the world, including Africa.

### How is Hepatitis B spread?

People get Hepatitis B when they come into contact with blood from a person who has the virus. Hepatitis B can be passed from an infected mother to her baby at birth or from a family member to young children. The virus can also be spread through sex with an infected person. Hepatitis B is passed the same way as HIV, but spreads more easily. Hepatitis B is not spread through breastfeeding, hugging, kissing, holding hands, coughing, or sneezing.

### Do people with Hepatitis B feel sick?

Most people can live with Hepatitis B for many years without feeling sick. Over time, Hepatitis B can lead to liver damage, liver failure, and even liver cancer.

### How do people know if they have Hepatitis B?

The only way people know if they have Hepatitis B is if they get a blood test for Hepatitis B. This is a simple test that takes only a little bit of blood from a person's arm. People should ask their doctors if they should be tested for Hepatitis B.



If you or your parents were born in Africa, talk to your doctor about getting tested for Hepatitis B

### Who should be tested for Hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B testing is recommended for:

- People born in most African countries, especially countries in Sub-Saharan Africa
- People whose parents were born in Sub-Saharan Africa
- People who live with someone who has Hepatitis B

### Why should people be tested for Hepatitis B?

It's important for people to know if they have Hepatitis B. There are treatments available for Hepatitis B that can help prevent serious health problems. People who find out they have Hepatitis B can also take steps to prevent passing the virus to others, such as using a condom when having sex with a partner who does not have Hepatitis B. Those who have never had Hepatitis B can get a vaccine to protect them from getting the virus.

### For More Information

Talk to your doctor, call your local health department, or visit [www.cdc.gov/hepatitis](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis) for information in English.



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[www.cdc.gov/hepatitis](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis)

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