

Buck JM, Morrow KM, Margolis AD, Eldridge G, Sosman J, MacGowan RJ, Binson D, Kacanek D, Flanigan TP, and the Project START Study Group. Hepatitis B Vaccination in prison: The perspectives of formerly incarcerated men. *J Correctional Health Care* 2006; 12(1):12-23.

Nearly 30% of new hepatitis B virus (HBV) infections have been detected in people with a history of incarceration. Although a safe and effective HBV vaccine is available, it is not routinely provided to inmates. This is a significant missed public health opportunity. Barriers to routine vaccination include cost, difficulties completing vaccination series in a transient population, insufficient collaboration between public health organizations and correctional health systems, and inmate refusal of vaccination. We assessed inmates' knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of HBV and HBV testing and vaccination. HBV testing and vaccination were offered. We interviewed 42 men, aged 18-29 years, who were recently released from prison, of whom 28 agreed to be tested for HBV. Of those tested, 71% were susceptible to HBV. Many had misconceptions about HBV or HBV vaccination. However, most participants were willing to be vaccinated for HBV once informed. Barriers to vaccination during incarceration were fear of needles and distrust of prison staff; additionally, after release, barriers were time and cost. These findings support the need for education and routine hepatitis B vaccination programs for inmates during incarceration.