



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at The Reschini Group

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CHILD VACCINATIONS: HEPATITIS B

Hepatitis B is a serious liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV). Most people with Hepatitis B experience no symptoms, making it easy to spread. Fortunately, Hepatitis B can be prevented by getting vaccinated.

Effects

Hepatitis B can cause short-term (acute) illnesses and can lead to the following:

- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain
- Tiredness
- Pain in muscles, joints and stomach
- Diarrhea and vomiting
- Jaundice (yellow skin or eyes)

It can also have long-term (chronic) effects that can lead to the following:

- Liver damage (cirrhosis)
- Liver cancer
- Liver failure

Infection

Hepatitis B is spread through contact with the blood and body fluids of an infected person. If vaccinated early for HBV, however, most people will be fully protected from the virus for life.

Vaccination Schedule

Three doses of the vaccine need to be given, one at each of the following ages: birth, one to two months old, and six to 18 months old.

Individuals under the age of 18 should receive the HBV vaccine, regardless of whether or not the vaccine is received at the suggested ages.

Tips for Parents

To make your child's vaccination experience easier, below are a few tips to keep in mind:

- Tell older children what is going to happen. Explain to them that the vaccination will keep them safe and healthy. Knowing ahead of time what to expect will reassure your child and make it less scary.
- Let your child know that it is okay to be scared, but suggest he or she try to be brave. Praise your child for his or her bravery after the vaccination is over.
- Try to distract your child while the vaccination is being administered. For example, have him or her look away rather than watch, or count or sing the alphabet.

For more information, please contact the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) National Immunization Hotline, 800-232-2522, or www.cdc.gov/vaccines.

