

Hepatitis B and a Healthy Baby





What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a serious illness that is very common in many different countries. Millions of people throughout the world have hepatitis B. Many people have hepatitis B and do not feel sick. Other people with hepatitis B do get sick.



This talk is for women who have hepatitis B and are pregnant or just had a baby. Hepatitis B can be very serious for new babies. This talk will teach you about hepatitis B and what you can do to help you and your baby be healthy.



How does a woman know if she has hepatitis B?

All pregnant women are given a test for hepatitis B when they see a doctor. If a woman has not seen a doctor when she is pregnant, she will get a test at the hospital when she gives birth. The nurse will take a small amount of blood from a woman's arm for this test.



How does a baby get hepatitis B ?

A woman with hepatitis B can give her baby hepatitis B during childbirth. If a baby gets hepatitis B, the baby can get very sick as he or she grows up.



Can doctors stop babies from getting hepatitis B?

Yes. All babies born in the United States are given shots or vaccinations to prevent hepatitis B. The first shot is given to a baby in the hospital after the baby is born.



How many shots does a baby need to stop him from getting hepatitis B?

Babies get 3 or more shots for hepatitis B. Your baby's doctor will tell you how many shots are needed to stop your baby from getting hepatitis B. Your doctor will also ask you to bring your baby to the clinic for an examination and other shots. This helps you have a healthy baby.



When do you bring your baby to the doctor?

Your doctor or nurse will tell you when to bring your baby to the clinic. Your baby should get a second shot for hepatitis B when he or she is 1 to 2 months old. It is very important to bring your baby to the doctor for this shot. After the second shot, your baby needs to get a third shot for hepatitis B. The doctor will tell you when you need to come back for that shot. He will also tell you if your baby needs more shots.



Can you breastfeed your baby?

Yes, you can breast feed your baby. You cannot give your baby Hepatitis B by breastfeeding.



Can you eat with your family?

Yes, you can eat with your family. Your family will not get hepatitis B from eating at the same table or sharing eating utensils. Some mothers chew food and then feed it to their babies. Doctors say do not do this. Your baby can get hepatitis B from food you have chewed.



Can you hug or kiss your baby?

Yes, it is safe to hug and kiss your baby. You cannot give your baby hepatitis B by hugging or kissing.



What can you do to keep your family healthy?

Everyone who lives in your house should see a doctor. This means your family, your children and anyone else who lives in your house. The father of your baby should also see a doctor. The doctor will talk to them about how to stop hepatitis B.



Do you have any questions? If you have questions, I will try to answer them or find another person who can.