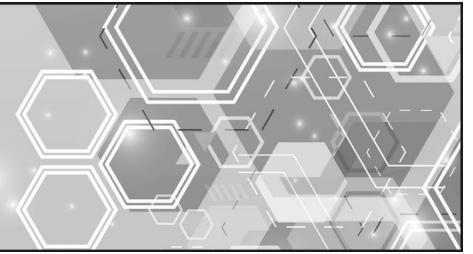




Durham Region Health Department Facts about...



Hepatitis B Vaccine

What is it?

Hepatitis B vaccine protects against liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus. For more information, see [Facts About...Hepatitis B](#).

There are several types of hepatitis B vaccines available in Canada. There are types that protect against hepatitis B virus only, and there are combination vaccines that protect against hepatitis B and other diseases. Talk to your health care provider for more information.

How effective is the vaccine?

- Hepatitis B vaccine is 95% to 100% effective in preventing hepatitis B in people who receive a complete vaccine series.
- The vaccine does not protect people who are already infected with hepatitis B.

Who should get the vaccine?

The following people are able to receive the **hepatitis B vaccine for free**:

- Grade 7 and 8 students through the school-based immunization program.
- People who are at more risk of being exposed to the disease, such as health care providers or emergency service workers.
- People who are at more risk of the disease because of chronic health issues.
- People who are in contact with someone with hepatitis B.
- People who are or who come from an area where hepatitis B is widespread should talk to their health care provider about getting the vaccine.

The vaccine may be recommended for those who want to decrease their risk of hepatitis, however the vaccine would have to be purchased. Check with your health care provider to see if you should be immunized.

What is the schedule for the vaccine?

- Hepatitis B vaccine is routinely given to students 11 to 15 years of age as two doses, 6 months apart as part of the Grade 7 school-based immunization program.
- Those who receive the vaccine when they are 15 years of age or older get 3 doses: 0, 1 and 6-months apart.
- Routine boosters are not recommended if the vaccine series has been completed.

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If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.



Are there side effects with the vaccine?

- Hepatitis B vaccine is safe and well tolerated. Side effects are usually mild and last a short time.
- The most common side effects are redness, pain and swelling where the needle was given. Other side effects may include irritability, headache, fatigue.
- If you think a serious reaction is developing, seek medical attention right away. Any unusual or significant changes in your health or your child's health after the immunization should be reported to a health care provider and the Health Department.

Who should **NOT** get the vaccine?

- If you have a severe allergy (anaphylaxis) to any previous(s) or to any part of the vaccine.

For more information on contents of the vaccine refer to the [Canadian Immunization Guide, Evergreen Edition](#).

Don't forget to update your immunization record!

After you or your child receives a vaccine, update your immunization record (yellow card). For children in school or child care, call the Health Department to update your child's immunization records. Keep your records in a safe place.

September 29, 2020

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