

Take the Next Step to Protect Your Liver from Hep B and Hep C

Hepatitis B and hepatitis C are viruses that attack the liver. Without treatment they can cause liver disease, cirrhosis and liver cancer.

- > **Hepatitis B** has a vaccine and effective treatment.
- > **Hepatitis C** can be cured and prevented.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can get tested to protect their liver.



HEPATITIS B FACTS

Almost 230,000 people in Australia are living with hepatitis B.

7% of people living with hepatitis B in Australia are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Hepatitis B is spread through blood and some sexual fluids.

Some of the ways you can get it are:

- From mother to child during childbirth
- Open cuts or sores
- Having sex without a condom
- Backyard tattoos or sharing any injecting equipment for drugs or steroids.



Babies and young children are much more likely to get chronic hepatitis B, which means they will have it their whole life.



There is a vaccine that all babies in Australia should get that protects them from getting hepatitis B.



Many people with hepatitis B feel healthy for years, but the virus could be causing serious liver damage or liver cancer.



If you have hepatitis B, you should get a **liver check from your doctor every 6-12 months**.

Some people with hepatitis B need treatment to protect their liver.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP:



Get a hepatitis test – they aren't part of normal blood tests



Ask about hepatitis B vaccines if you are pregnant or don't know your vaccine status



If you have hepatitis B, see your doctor for a liver check every 6-12 months even if you don't feel sick.



HEPATITIS C FACTS

Nearly 63,000 people in Australia are living with hepatitis C

18% of people living with hepatitis C in Australia are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Hepatitis C is spread through blood.

Some of the ways you can get it are:

- Sharing any injecting equipment for drugs or steroids
- Backyard tattoos
- If you had a blood transfusion before 1990.



There is a cure for hepatitis C. It's tablets that you take for up to 12 weeks. Most people have no side effects.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP:



Get a hepatitis test – they aren't part of normal blood tests



If you have hepatitis C, get cured



Always use new, sterile injecting equipment.



GET SUPPORT



ACCHOS

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) provide culturally safe, comprehensive primary health care, including prevention, testing, and care for hepatitis B and C.



HepLink

HepLink is Australia's national hepatitis information, support and navigation service. It is free and confidential.

You can get hepatitis C cures through HepLink Hepatitis C Telehealth. You don't need a referral.

Call 1800 437 222 or visit www.heplink.au

REFERENCES

1. MacLachlan JH, Mondel A, Purcell I, Cowie BC. Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project: Hepatitis B National Report 2023. Darlinghurst, NSW, Australia: ASHM
2. Kirby Institute. Progress towards hepatitis C elimination among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia. The Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney