

## What is hepatitis B and why do I need to protect my baby now?

Hepatitis B is a serious disease caused by the hepatitis B virus. Hepatitis B is a deadly disease. It is preventable with vaccination.

## How is hepatitis B virus spread?

Anyone can become infected with hepatitis B virus at anytime during their lives. The virus is spread by contact with an infected person's blood or certain body fluids. Babies can get hepatitis B virus from their infected mothers at birth. Anyone can get it if they live with or are cared for by an infected person, or by sharing personal care items such as a razor, toothbrush, or washcloth, with an infected person.

It is impossible to know if a person is infected with the hepatitis B virus by looking at them. Most people have no symptoms, do not feel sick, and do not know they are infected. As a result, they can spread the virus to others without knowing it. A blood test is the only way to know if a person is infected.



### Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program

Protecting Families and Babies.

For more information about the Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program, contact the Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Immunization at (850) 245-4342, visit [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org), or send an email to [Immunization@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:Immunization@doh.state.fl.us).



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Hepatitis B Shots are  
Recommended for All New Babies



### Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program

Protecting Families and Babies.

Prenatal screening to  
protect health.

# Hepatitis B vaccine helps protect your baby's future!



## Why does my baby need a hepatitis B shot at birth?

It is important to vaccinate babies at birth so they will be protected as soon as possible from any exposure to the hepatitis B virus.

About 9 out of 10 babies who get infected in the first year of life will stay infected for life.

Experts recommend your baby receive the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine before leaving the hospital.



## Is hepatitis B vaccine safe?

Yes. Hepatitis B vaccine has been shown to be very safe when given to people of all ages.

Before receiving any vaccine your healthcare provider should give you a Vaccine Information Statement (VIS). These information sheets, produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, explain both the benefits and risks of a vaccine. Federal law requires a VIS is handed out to vaccine recipients, their parents, or their legal representatives prior to receiving a hepatitis B vaccine.



## How many doses of hepatitis B vaccine will my baby receive?

The basic series is 3 doses. The first dose should be given in the hospital at birth, the second dose 1 to 2 months later, and the third dose at 6 months of age or later. The vaccine is very effective. More than 95% of infants, children, and adolescents develop protection from the hepatitis B virus after completion of the series. Studies have shown that the vaccine protects people for at least 20 years.

