

THIS IS AN OFFICIAL NH DHHS HEALTH ALERT

Distributed by the NH Health Alert Network
DHHS.Health.Alert@dhhs.nh.gov
December 5, 2025, 1525 hrs (3:25 PM EDT)
NH-HAN 202512051



Department of
**HEALTH &
HUMAN SERVICES**

Hepatitis B Vaccine Recommendations

Key Points and Recommendations:

- CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted on Friday 12/5 to no longer universally recommend the hepatitis B vaccine for all infants and children.
 - ACIP changed their recommendation to shared clinical decision making, which will preserve access for hepatitis B vaccination for all children through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program.
 - The ACIP meeting did not include new safety data regarding hepatitis B vaccination.
- The New Hampshire Division of Public Health (DPH) and expert medical organizations like the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP) and the [American Academy of Family Physicians](#) (AAFP) continue to recommend the 3-dose hepatitis B vaccine series for all children, with the first dose given within 24 hours of birth for healthy medically stable infants.
- Decades of use and study show that the hepatitis B vaccine is safe with low risks and high levels of protection ([CDC Review, 2025](#); [VIP Review 2025](#)).
 - The 3-dose vaccine series produces seroprotection in ~98% of healthy term infants ([Schillie and Murphy, Vaccine. 2013](#)).
 - Vaccine side effects primarily include localized reactions like injection site pain, swelling, and erythema; and systemic side effects like fever, irritability, fatigue, and headache.
 - Serious side effects are rare and association between hepatitis B vaccination and long-term or serious adverse events has not been identified ([VIP Review 2025](#)).
- Universal prenatal screening of all pregnant women for hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) continues to be [recommended](#) early in pregnancy (ideally in the first trimester) to identify perinatally exposed infants that require immediate [post-exposure prophylaxis](#), but testing alone cannot eliminate risk (see **Background Information**).

Background Information:

- The hepatitis B virus (HBV) is highly infectious and viable virus can persist on contaminated environmental surfaces for up to seven days.
- Up to 50% of people in the U.S. living with HBV infection are unaware of their infection and can unknowingly spread the virus to others ([Bixler et al. Hepatol Commun. 2023](#)).
- 90% of newborns infected perinatally will develop a chronic HBV infection, and 25% of children that become chronically infected will die prematurely from liver disease, cirrhosis, and/or hepatocellular carcinoma.

-
- Before routine hepatitis B vaccination, an estimated 16,000 children younger than 10 years of age were non-perinatally infected each year with HBV, excluding perinatal infections ([Armstrong et al. Pediatrics. 2001](#)).
 - Since implementation of universal hepatitis B vaccination in 1991, there has been a 99% reduction in the incidence of HBV infection among infants and children ([Bixler et al. Public Health Rep. 2023](#)).
 - Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) is the serologic marker of acute HBV infection. However, it can take 1 to 10 weeks after exposure to HBV for HBsAg to become detectable in serum, which can contribute to “false-negative” test results early in infection.

- For any questions regarding this notification, please call the NH DHHS, DPH, Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at (603) 271-4496 during business hours (8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.).
- If you are calling after hours or on the weekend, please call the New Hampshire Hospital switchboard at (603) 271-5300 and request the Public Health Professional on-call.
- To change your contact information in the NH Health Alert Network, send an email to DHHS.Health.Alert@dhhs.nh.gov or visit <https://nhhan.org/>.

Status: Actual
Message Type: Alert
Severity: Moderate
Sensitivity: Not Sensitive
Message Identifier: NH-HAN 202512051
Delivery Time: 12 hours
Acknowledgement: No
Distribution Method: Email, Fax
Distributed to: Physicians, Physician Assistants, Practice Managers, Infection Control Practitioners, Infectious Disease Specialists, Community Health Centers, Hospitals, Hospital CEOs, Hospital Emergency Departments, EMS, Nurses, NHHA, Pharmacists, Laboratory Response Network, Manchester Health Department, Nashua Health Department, Public Health Networks, DHHS Outbreak Team, DPHS Investigation Team, DPHS Management Team, Northeast State Epidemiologists, Zoonotic Alert Team, Health Officers, Deputy Health Officers, MRC, NH Schools, EWIDS, Dialysis & Transplant Clinics, STD Clinics, Immunization Practices, Travel Centers, Influenza Sentinels, Urgent Care Centers, Ambulatory Surgical Centers, Walk-in Clinics, Poison Center, Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Centers, Long-Term Care Facilities, Community Mental Health Centers, Health Departments, Internal Medicine, Occupational Health, Gastroenterology, Schools and Daycare Providers, Regional Public Health Networks, Environmental Services, Family Planning Programs, Department of Corrections, Home Care Providers, Local and State Partners, Area Agencies
From: Benjamin P. Chan, MD, MPH, State Epidemiologist
Originating Agency: NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health

Attachments: None