

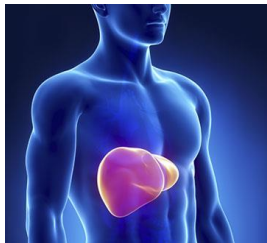


## *Know hepatitis - Act now*

Did you know?

Your liver does many things to keep you alive.

Your liver fights infections, stops bleeding, removes drugs and other poisons from your blood, stores energy for when you need it. You cannot afford to lose your liver!



Hepatitis B is a viral infection of the liver. It may, in connivance with its other brothers and sisters ie hepatitis A, C, D, E , F , infect the liver.

Viral infection of the liver makes the liver to be inflamed (swell)

Viral hepatitis infection affects about 400 million people worldwide, mostly in South Sahara Africa, including Nigeria.

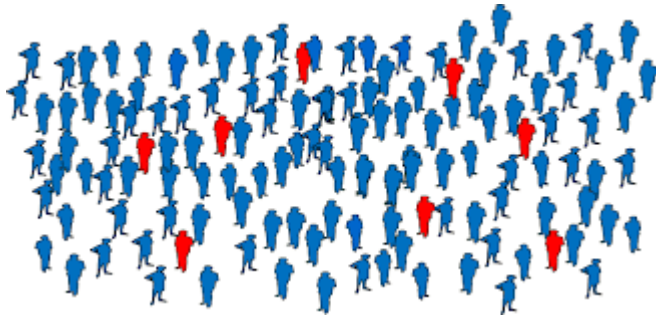
6-10 million people are newly infected every year.

1.4 million people die, globally, each year from hepatitis.

Only 5% of people with chronic hepatitis know of their infection and less than 1% have access to treatment.

Long term consequences of chronic hepatitis could be cirrhosis of the liver, liver failure, liver cancer or death.

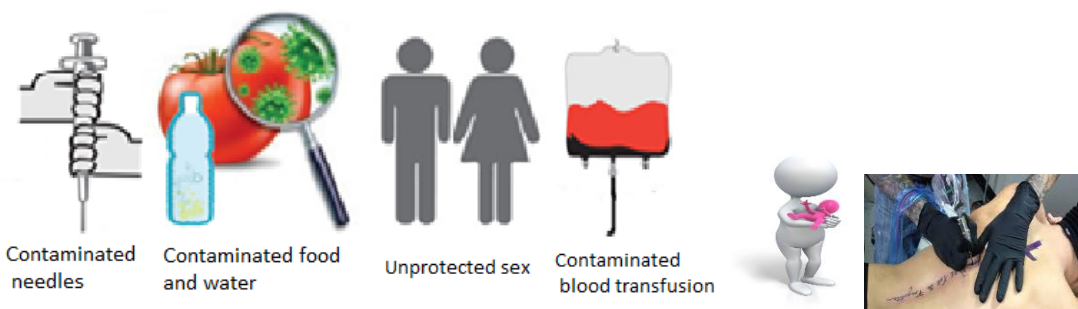
About 1 in every 10 people in Nigeria is infected with Hepatitis B virus.



## How can one get infected with hepatitis?

Hepatitis B and C infections are commonly transmitted through:

- Contaminated needles and syringes
- From an infected mother to her new-born child.
- Unscreened blood transfusion or use of unscreened blood products
- Medical or dental interventions without adequate sterilization of equipment
- Sharing equipment for injecting drugs
- Needle stick injury in health care settings
- Sharing razors, toothbrushes or other personal household articles
- Tattooing and body piercing if done using unsterilized equipment
- Unprotected sex with an infected person



Mother to child unsterilized tattoo

Hepatitis A and E are transmitted through contaminated food and water

Hepatitis D is spread through contact with infected blood but occurs in people who already have Hepatitis B

## What may suggest that you have hepatitis?

**Symptoms can include:**

 Yellowing skin and eyes	 Dark urine	 Light-colored stools
 Nausea and vomiting	 Loss of appetite	 Extreme fatigue

- Please see your Pharmacist or Doctor if you think you have hepatitis

## How can you know if you have hepatitis?

### Get tested

There are two tests:

First blood test looks for exposure. This is called an antigen or screening test and it can be done rapidly anywhere even in the Pharmacy because rapid test strips are available.



The second test looks for the virus. This is called a PCR or confirmatory test. This test is conducted if you test positive to the screening test. It is done in the laboratories.

### What if you test positive?

#### Ask to be treated

- Globally, most people who need treatment have not been treated,
  - There is largely a lack of awareness and access to hepatitis treatment and services.
  - Over 90% of people with hepatitis C can be completely cured of the virus within 3–6 months. New oral well tolerated medicines are available to treat chronic hepatitis C
- Appropriate treatment of hepatitis B and C can prevent the development of the major life-threatening complications of chronic liver disease: cirrhosis and liver cancer.



If you test positive for any hepatitis, talk to your Pharmacist or Doctor about treatment and prevention of other hepatitis.

If you test negative, protect yourself and your loved ones from getting hepatitis.

## Prevention

- **Safe food, water and sanitation:** Hepatitis A and E can be prevented by adequate supplies of safe drinking water, proper disposal of sewage within communities and personal hygiene practices such as regular hand-washing with safe water.



- **Vaccination:** Safe and effective vaccines are available to protect against hepatitis A, B and E. Routine Hepatitis B vaccination is recommended by World Health Organisation (WHO), Federal Ministry of Health of Nigeria, Paediatric Association of Nigeria Society for Gastroenterology & Hepatology in Nigeria (SOGHIN). If you have never been vaccinated please seek to be vaccinated. Hepatitis B vaccines offer 95% protection against hepatitis.

#### Who should be vaccinated?

- All new-born: All infants should receive and complete hepatitis B vaccination schedule.
- All healthcare personnel
- *Medical & paramedical*
- Patients undergoing blood transfusion
- All at-risk groups
- Family members of infected persons

**Prevention of mother-to-child transmission:** Hepatitis B Immunoglobulins administered as soon as possible (within 12-72 hours of birth) should be given to all new born babies of hepatitis B infected mothers.

In the case of needle stick injury in healthcare settings, hepatitis B Immunoglobulins is to be administered as soon as possible, within 12-72 hours of exposure to hepatitis B and should still be considered up to 7days of exposure and repeated a month after first dose. It provides immediate protection that lasts for about 3 months.

## Hepatitis Dos

- Screen blood donations and blood before transfusion
- Provide sterile injecting equipment
- Ensure infection control in health care settings
- Promote safe injection practices
- Use bandages to cover cuts and open sores
- Ensure your family and close friends get tested and get the vaccine for hepatitis B
- If positive to hepatitis B, please get vaccinated against Hepatitis A and C

## Hepatitis Don'ts

- Don't share needles or syringes
- Don't share razors, toothbrushes or anything that might have blood on it with others
- Engage in safe sex : practice abstinence, be faithful or use a condom
- Clean drops of blood off things with a mixture of bleach and water (3:7)

Join the world to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030 through

- Vaccination (ask your pharmacist)
- Testing
- Treatment

***Talk to your Pharmacist about vaccination today! It is a lot cheaper to prevent hepatitis than to treat it.***

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For more information, contact your pharmacist @ Drug Information Centre (DIC), Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), 52A Ikorodu Road, Fadeyi, Lagos, Nigeria. [acpn\\_dic@yahoo.com](mailto:acpn_dic@yahoo.com) 08187335846, 08027257245

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