

What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a viral infection which can be fatal.

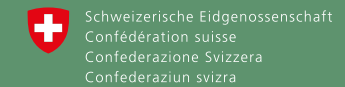
Vaccination offers the best protection against hepatitis B.

Hepatitis B can be managed effectively with medication.

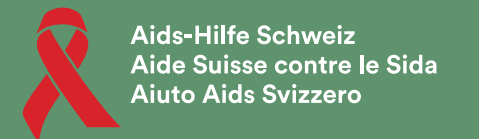
For more information:
www.hepatitis-schweiz.ch



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1 The virus

Hepatitis B is caused by a virus which affects the liver.

There is a safe vaccine which protects against infection.

The illness can be managed well with medication.

Hepatitis B can be fatal if left untreated.



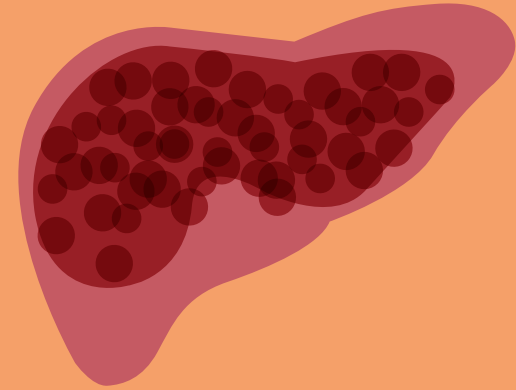
3 Vaccination

There is a safe and effective vaccine against hepatitis B. It is administered in several doses, after which it provides lifelong protection.



5 Liver damage

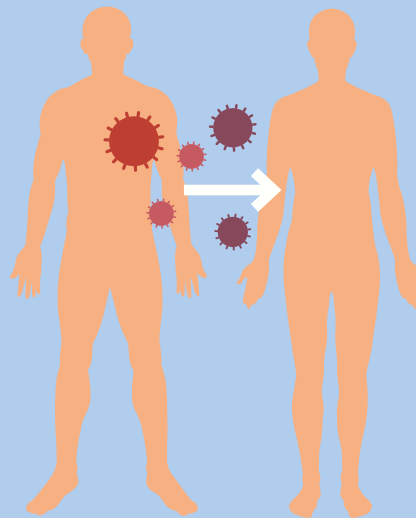
In case of infection, the virus becomes lodged in the liver. The liver can scar after many years. It hardens and stops functioning properly. Cancer can also develop. Cancer or liver scarring can result in death.



2 Transmission

The hepatitis B virus is transmitted from person to person sexually and through blood from:

- unprotected anal or vaginal intercourse;
- sharing drug paraphernalia (syringes, needles, tubes);
- mother to child during birth;
- contaminated tattoo or piercing equipment;
- medical procedures (dentistry, surgery) performed in an unsanitary manner.



4 Testing

Blood tests can identify various particles of the virus and of the bodily defences against viruses. They determine whether an infection is present. A blood sample is sufficient for an initial test to rule out an active hepatitis B infection.



6 Treatment

There are various highly effective treatments. Medication can suppress viral replication in the body. This prevents the illness from progressing and keeps the liver healthy.

