

Immunization Policy for Hepatitis B Vaccine

This policy applies to all healthcare workers, students, and staff members working or studying in clinical settings where there is a risk of exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials.

The purpose is to protect the health and safety of healthcare workers, students, and patients by ensuring appropriate immunization against the Hepatitis B virus (HBV) for individuals who may be at risk of exposure to blood borne pathogens in the workplace.

Hepatitis B is a serious liver infection caused by the Hepatitis B virus (HBV), which is transmitted through contact with infected blood or bodily fluids. Healthcare workers, dental students, and staff are at an increased risk of occupational exposure to HBV due to the nature of their work, including procedures that may involve the handling of sharp instruments, exposure to blood, or other potential risks.

The Hepatitis B vaccine is recommended for all healthcare workers, including dental professionals, dental students, and clinical staff who may come into contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.

Hepatitis B Vaccination for Healthcare Workers and Students

All healthcare workers, including dental students, faculty, and clinical staff, must be vaccinated against Hepatitis B prior to their involvement in clinical training or patient care. This includes those who may be exposed to blood, blood products, or other potentially infectious materials in the workplace or educational setting.

- **Initial Vaccination Schedule:** The Hepatitis B vaccine is administered in a series of three injections. The standard dosing schedule is:
 - **First dose:** Administered at an agreed time.
 - **Second dose:** Administered one month after the first dose.
 - **Third dose:** Administered six months after the first dose.

- **Alternative Schedules:** If a worker/student misses one of the doses, they should receive the missed dose as soon as possible. The vaccination series should be completed within a reasonable period to ensure immunity.

Documentation and Record Keeping

- **Vaccination Record:** All healthcare workers and students must provide documentation showing proof of Hepatitis B vaccination, or serologic evidence of immunity (HBsAb levels greater than 10 mIU/mL), before starting clinical work.
- **Titers (Serologic Testing):** After completing the vaccination series, individuals should be tested for Hepatitis B surface antibody (anti-HBs) to verify immunity. If immunity is not achieved, a second series of the vaccine or additional clinical follow-up may be recommended.

Note: If immunity is not achieved after the second vaccination series, the individual may require further medical evaluation or consultation with an infectious disease specialist.

Exemptions

- **Medical Exemptions:** Individuals who have contraindications to the Hepatitis B vaccine, such as severe allergies to vaccine components, will be evaluated by a medical provider. Written documentation from a healthcare provider is required for any medical exemption.
- **Religious or Personal Exemptions:** Individuals requesting an exemption based on religious or personal beliefs must submit a written request for exemption.

Post-Exposure Management

In the event of an exposure to blood or other potentially infectious material (e.g., a needle-stick injury, mucosal splash, etc.), the following protocol should be followed:

Immediate Actions After Exposure

- **Wash the exposed area immediately** with soap and water.
- **Flush mucous membranes** (eyes, nose, mouth) with water.

- **Report the incident** to the designated supervisor or healthcare provider for evaluation.
- **Medical Evaluation** will be conducted as soon as possible to determine if post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) with the Hepatitis B vaccine or Hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) is needed.


Post-Exposure Hepatitis B Vaccination

- If the individual has **not been vaccinated** or if their vaccination status is unknown, they should receive the first dose of the Hepatitis B vaccine immediately after the exposure. A full series of vaccination will be given according to the standard schedule, and they should be monitored for anti-HBs titers.
- **For those who are non-responders** (anti-HBs <10 mIU/mL), a different post-exposure protocol may be followed in consultation with an infectious disease specialist, including the potential use of HBIG in combination with the vaccine.

Educational Requirements

- All healthcare workers and dental students will receive training on the Hepatitis B virus, transmission risks, vaccination, and post-exposure protocols during their orientation or as part of their ongoing professional development.
- Training should include the importance of vaccination, recognition of potential exposure incidents, and steps to take following an exposure event.

Vaccination against Hepatitis B is a critical element of ensuring the health and safety of healthcare workers and students, particularly those working in environments where there is a risk of exposure to blood borne pathogens. By adhering to this immunization policy, individuals can protect themselves and their patients from the serious health risks associated with Hepatitis B infection.



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