



- Wear gloves and use a fresh solution of bleach and water to clean up blood spills
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after touching or cleaning up blood
- Use condoms with sexual partners
- Avoid illegal drugs and prescription drug misuse, including injection of such drugs
- Most importantly, make sure you receive the hepatitis B vaccine!

Hepatitis B Blood Tests

Is there a blood test for hepatitis B?

What three tests make up the "hepatitis B blood panel"?

What is the hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg)?

What is the hepatitis B surface antibody (HBsAb)?

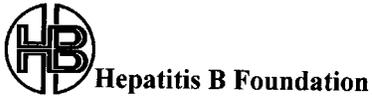
What is the hepatitis B core antibody (HBcAb)?

I donated blood and received a letter from the blood bank, what does it mean?

Is there a blood test for hepatitis B?

There is a simple hepatitis B blood test that your doctor or health clinic can order called the "hepatitis B blood panel". This blood sample can be taken in the doctor's office. There are 3 common tests that make up this blood panel. Sometimes the doctor may ask to check your blood again six months after your first visit to confirm your hepatitis B status. If you think you have been recently infected with hepatitis B, it will take 4 -6 weeks before the virus will be detected in your blood.

Understanding your hepatitis B blood test results can be confusing, so you want to be clear about your diagnosis - do you have a new infection, have you recovered from a past infection, or do you have a chronic infection? In addition, it is helpful if you request a written copy of your blood tests so that you fully understand which tests are positive or negative.



What three tests make up the "hepatitis B blood panel"?

The hepatitis B blood panel requires only one blood sample but includes three tests:

- **HBsAg** (hepatitis B surface antigen)
- **HBsAb or Anti-HBs** (hepatitis B surface antibody)
- **HBcAb or anti-HBc** (hepatitis B core antibody)

The doctor needs all 3 blood test results in order to determine your diagnosis.

What is the hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg)?

This tests for the presence of virus. A "positive" or "reactive" HBsAg test result means that the person is infected with the hepatitis B virus, which can be an "acute" or a "chronic" infection. Infected people can pass the virus on to others through their blood and infected bodily fluids.

What is the hepatitis B surface antibody (HBsAb or anti-HBs)?

A "positive" or "reactive" HBsAb (or anti-HBs) test result indicates that a person has successfully responded to the hepatitis B vaccine or has recovered from an acute hepatitis B infection. This result means that you are immune to future hepatitis B infection and you are not contagious. This test is not routinely included in blood bank screenings.

What is the hepatitis B core antibody (HBcAb)?

The HBcAb is an antibody that is part of the virus- it does not provide protection. A "positive" or "reactive" HBcAb (or anti-HBc) test result indicates a past or present infection, but it could also be a false positive. The interpretation of this test result depends on the results of the other two tests. Its appearance with the protective surface antibody (positive HBsAb or anti-HBs) indicates prior infection and recovery. For chronically infected persons, it will usually appear with the virus (positive HBsAg).

I donated blood and received a letter about hepatitis B from the blood bank, what does it mean?

First, do not panic. The letter does not necessarily mean that you are infected with hepatitis B.



All donated blood is screened for hepatitis B. Many blood banks use the "hepatitis B core antibody" test to screen donor blood for potential hepatitis B infection (see "What is the hepatitis B core antibody?" above). This test can detect whether a person might have been exposed to the hepatitis B virus, but by itself this blood test doesn't tell whether the person is actually infected or not. This is why **it is very important** to see your doctor so that he can order the hepatitis B blood panel to make an accurate diagnosis.

Living with Hepatitis B

Will I recover from a hepatitis B infection?

What is the difference between acute and chronic hepatitis B?

Will I become sick if I have acute hepatitis B?

How will I know when I have recovered from an acute hepatitis B infection?

What should I do if I have been diagnosed with chronic hepatitis B?

What tests will be used to monitor my chronic hepatitis B?

Is there a cure for chronic hepatitis B?

Are there any approved drugs to treat chronic hepatitis B?

If I have a chronic hepatitis B infection, should I be on medication?

What advice do you have for those living with chronic hepatitis B?

Can I donate blood if I have hepatitis B?

Will I recover from a hepatitis B infection?

The answer depends on whether you are infected as an adult, a child, or a baby. Most infected adults will recover without any problems, but unfortunately, most infected babies and children will develop chronic hepatitis B infections.

- **Adults** – 90% will get rid of the virus and recover without any problems; 10% will develop chronic hepatitis B.
- **Young Children** – 40% will get rid of the virus and recover without problems; 60% will develop a chronic hepatitis B infection.
- **Infants** – 90% will become chronically infected; only 10% will be able to get rid of the virus.