

Discussion Guide:

Talking to Your Doctor about Hepatitis B



A new diagnosis can be scary, but speaking with your doctor about your treatment and care can help your anxiety. Feeling prepared with the right questions can make a big difference. Using this guide can help you feel less intimidated and more comfortable speaking with your doctor about hepatitis B.

Are you unsure about which questions to ask your doctor since learning you have hepatitis B? This guide will help you cover the most important points during your next doctor's visit.

Preparing for your doctor's visit:

- Take a list of questions (see below) with you
- Bring copies of your previous blood test results
- If you feel comfortable, invite a friend or family member along for support
- Try to take notes while you talk to the doctor so that you have important information written down. If you have a friend with you, ask them to take notes too.

Questions to ask your doctor:

- Could you please explain each hepatitis B blood test result, and any additional test results (ultrasound)? Please make copies of my test results for my own personal files.
- Where can I get my family, spouse or sexual partner tested and vaccinated for hepatitis B? What do I need to do to protect them until they are completely vaccinated?
- Am I a good candidate for treatment? If not, why not? If yes, please explain why and tell me about the treatment options.
- If I am not eligible for medical treatment, what do I need to do to monitor my hepatitis B?
- Do I need to be regularly screened for liver cancer? If yes, how often?
- Could you tell me about clinical trials? Do you offer any clinical trials for hepatitis B? If so, could you please explain them to me?
- For young women: If I want to have children, should I wait to start treatment? If I need to start treatment now, at what point can I consider having children?
- How will having hepatitis B affect my job or ability to work?
- How will having hepatitis B affect my health insurance or my ability to get health insurance?
- Here are the names of the medications that I currently take – are they safe for my liver?
- What over-the-counter medications or herbal supplements can I safely take for pain, cold symptoms, etc.?
- Should I be tested for other liver diseases, such as hepatitis C or D?
- Should I be vaccinated to protect myself against hepatitis A?
- If my loved ones and close contacts receive the hepatitis B vaccine, do they need to receive booster shots after a certain period of time?