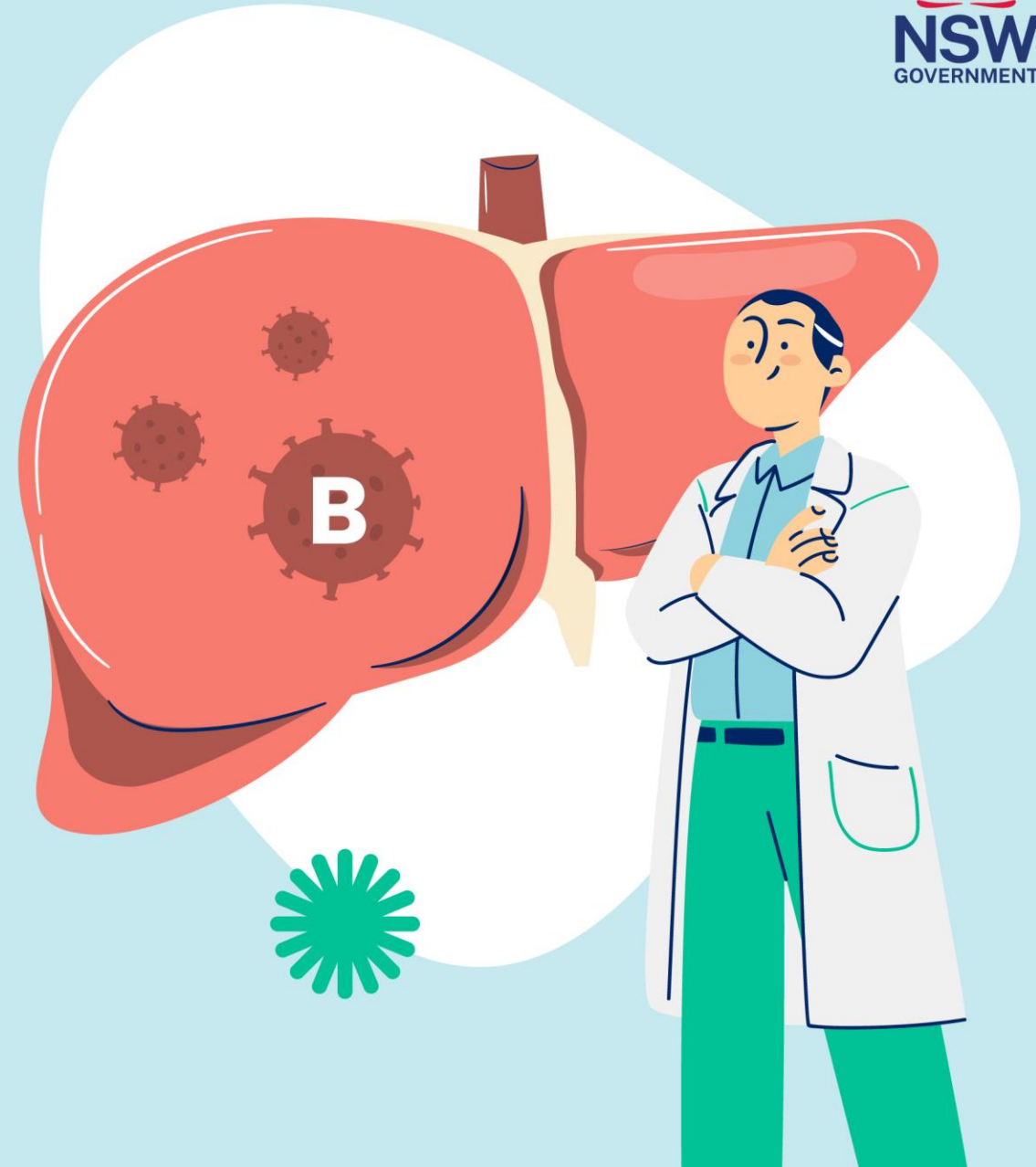


Understanding Hepatitis B



Why does hepatitis B matter?



Hepatitis B matters because it can lead to serious liver damage and liver cancer if left untreated.

Chronic hepatitis B is common in our communities.

Chronic hepatitis B can affect anyone.

Today we will talk about...



- ✓ What you need to know about hepatitis B with a focus on chronic hepatitis B
- ✓ How you get hepatitis B and possible symptoms
- ✓ Who should be tested
- ✓ Where and how to get tested
- ✓ Preventing and treating hepatitis B
- ✓ Who do you tell and not tell
- ✓ Where to get more information

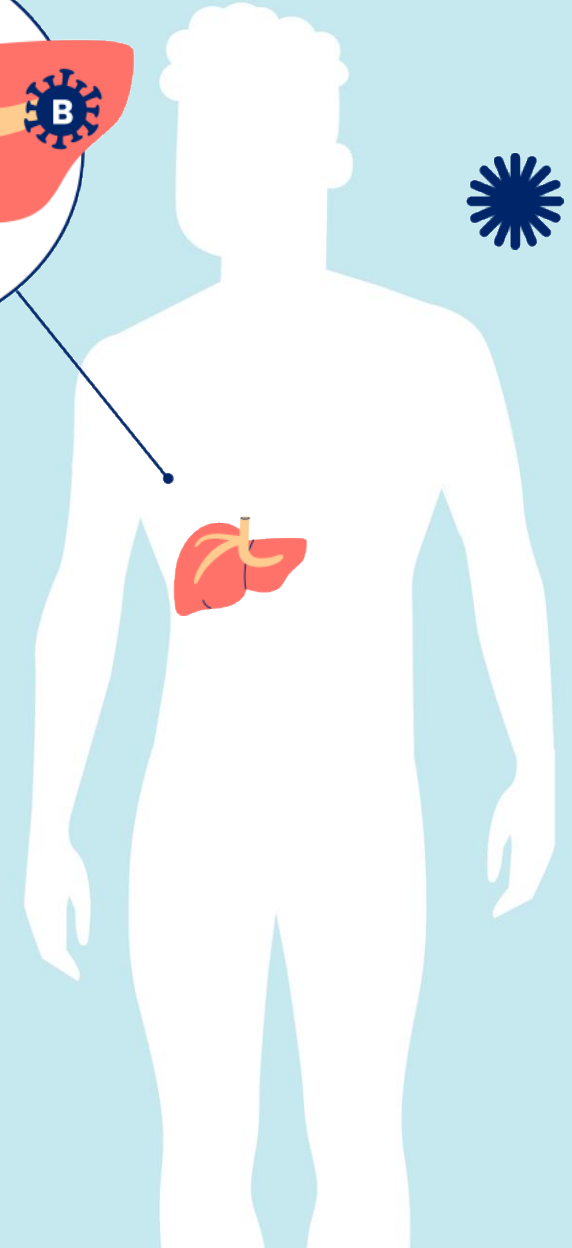
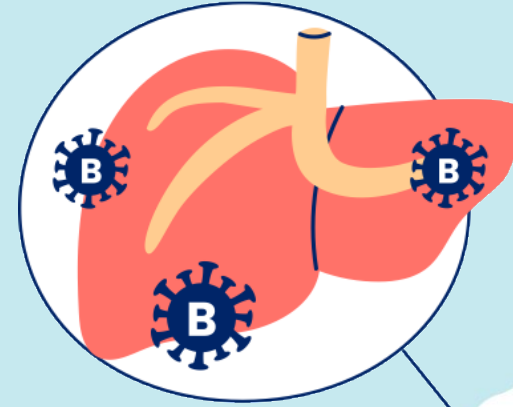


What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver

- ✓ Hepatitis B is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus
- ✓ It can be acute (short-term) or chronic (long-term)
- ✓ Chronic hepatitis B can cause liver damage and liver cancer
- ✓ Many people living with chronic hepatitis B don't know they have it.

In Australia, most people with chronic hepatitis B were born in countries where hepatitis B is common



What happens when you get hepatitis B?



Acute (short term)

Acute hepatitis B is when a person (usually an adult) gets rid of the virus within 6 months.

Once they clear it, they cannot be infected with the hepatitis B virus again and cannot pass it on to others.

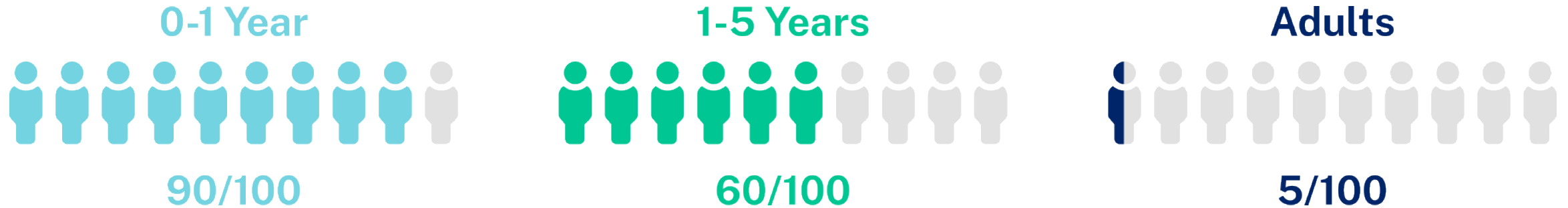
Chronic (long term)

Chronic hepatitis B is when the infection lasts more than 6 months.

Chronic hepatitis B can lead to liver damage (cirrhosis) and liver cancer.

The younger a person is when they get hepatitis B, the higher the risk of developing chronic hepatitis B as an adult

Approximate number of people who will develop chronic hepatitis B as adults

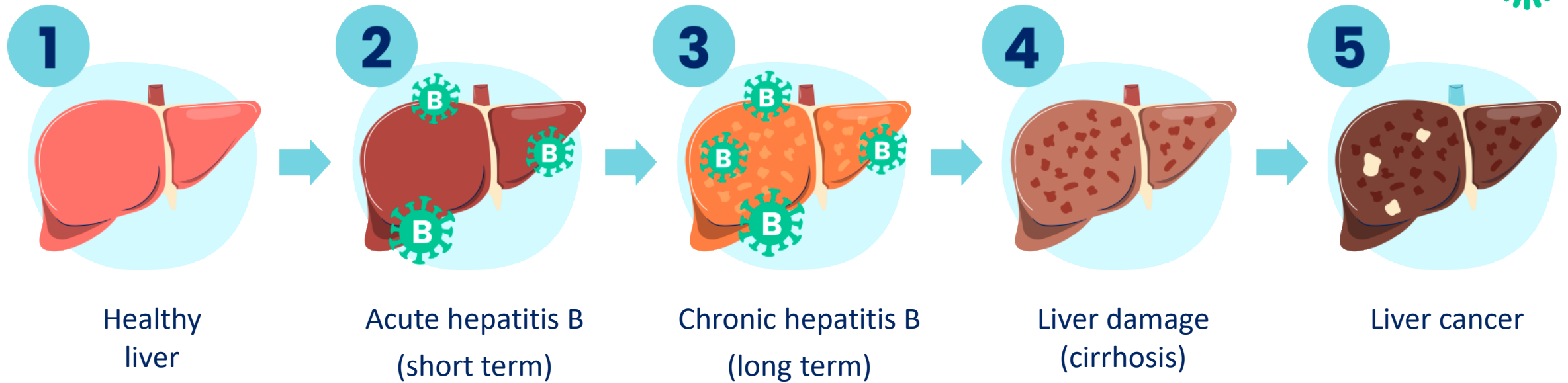


90% of babies who get infected will not clear the virus and will develop chronic hepatitis B



95% of adults who get infected with the hepatitis B virus will clear it within 6 months

How does hepatitis B affect your liver?



Getting tested now may help prevent liver complications in the future!

How do you get hepatitis B?



When body fluids (blood, semen, saliva or vaginal fluids) from someone with hepatitis B enter the body of another person.

- ✓ Through having sex without protection with a person who has hepatitis B (either acute or chronic)
- ✓ Through sharing equipment to inject drugs
- ✓ Through sharing razors or other personal items that may contain blood, including those used for cultural rituals

This includes amounts of blood too small to be seen

How do you get chronic hepatitis B?



From a mother with hepatitis B (either acute or chronic) to her baby at birth if the baby is not vaccinated.



From a child with hepatitis B to other children through cuts on the skin if they are not covered.



90% of babies who get infected will not clear the virus and will develop chronic hepatitis B



95% of adults who get infected with the hepatitis B virus will clear it within 6 months

You cannot get hepatitis B from...



Coughing or
sneezing



Hugging, kissing or
holding hands



Mosquito or other
insect bites



Sharing food, eating
utensils or drinking glasses



Sharing a bathroom
or toilet



Swimming
pools

What are the symptoms of hepatitis B?



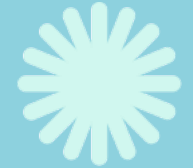
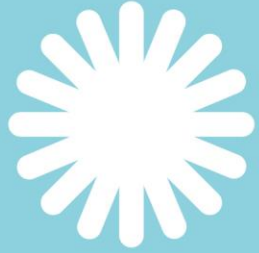
Acute hepatitis B

- ✓ Stomach pain
- ✓ Dark urine
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Nausea, vomiting or loss of appetite
- ✓ Pale stools
- ✓ Yellow skin and eyes (jaundice)

Chronic hepatitis B

- ✓ Stomach pain on the right side of the body
- ✓ Aches, pains and fevers
- ✓ Anxiety or depression
- ✓ Diabetes
- ✓ Nausea, vomiting or loss of appetite
- ✓ Skin rashes or itchy skin
- ✓ Yellow skin and eyes (jaundice)

The only way to know if you have chronic hepatitis B is by getting a hepatitis B blood test



It's quick
and easy



Testing for hepatitis B

There are different types of blood tests for hepatitis B, they are easy and confidential.



The tests results will tell you if you:

- ✓ Have chronic hepatitis B infection, and need care and treatment
- ✓ Have developed protection against hepatitis B, and cannot get it again
- ✓ Don't have protection against hepatitis B, and need a hepatitis B vaccination.

Where to get tested:

- ✓ General Practitioner (GP)
- ✓ NSW Sexual Health Clinics
- ✓ Family Planning Australia



Who should get a hepatitis B test?

It is also important to get tested for hepatitis B if you:

- ✓ Have a family member who has hepatitis B
- ✓ Live with someone with hepatitis B
- ✓ Have had sex without a condom
- ✓ Have had medical, dental or cosmetic procedures overseas where the equipment used was not clean
- ✓ Have hepatitis C or HIV
- ✓ Have injected drugs or steroids
- ✓ Had a blood transfusion overseas, or before 1990 in Australia.

If you were born or have lived in a country where hepatitis B is common, it is important you have a hepatitis B test



Treating chronic hepatitis B



If you have chronic hepatitis B you need to see your doctor regularly (every 6-12 months) to check the health of your liver, as liver damage can happen at any time.

Treatment can reduce damage to the liver and reduce the risk of liver cancer.

**Your doctor will tell you
if you need to go on treatment**



How do I protect myself from getting hepatitis B?

Vaccination is the best way to be protected against hepatitis B.

In Australia, the hepatitis B vaccination is free for:

- ✓ newborn babies
- ✓ children and adolescents
- ✓ family and people in close contact with someone who has hepatitis B.

Ask your doctor about the hepatitis B vaccination

Get vaccinated



Other ways to stop the spread of hepatitis B



Avoid blood-to-blood contact: do not share razors, toothbrushes or other personal items



Do not share needles or equipment for tattooing, piercing, or other traditional practices



Always use a condom and lubricant when you have sex



Do not share needles or any equipment used for injecting drugs

Understanding stigma around hepatitis B



Many people living with viral hepatitis are affected by stigma associated with hepatitis B because of:

- ✓ Assumptions about how they got hepatitis B
- ✓ Behaviours associated with hepatitis B.

These assumptions can influence a person's willingness to disclose their hepatitis B status.

Stigma creates barriers to healthcare and support.

Who to tell and not tell

By law you must tell people:

- ✓ When you give blood
- ✓ When donating organs and sperm
- ✓ When you apply for insurance
- ✓ If you join the Australian Defense Force
- ✓ When you apply for a visa to live in Australia
- ✓ If you are a health care worker who does medical procedures

You do not have to tell:

- ✓ Your boss at work
- ✓ The people you work with or go to school with
- ✓ Family members
- ✓ Health professionals



Where to get help

Your doctor or GP

Liver clinics and specialists - 1800 803 990

www.hep.org.au

Sexual health clinics - 1800 451 624

www.health.nsw.gov.au/sexualhealth

No Medicare card required

Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service

www.mhahs.org.au

Hepatitis NSW – 1800 803 990

www.hep.org.au



Where to get help in your language

If you need assistance with talking to your doctor or health provider in your language:

- ✓ Call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50
- ✓ The service is free and confidential
- ✓ Ask the receptionist to book a free interpreter for you.



What have we learnt today?



True or False?

1. You can get hepatitis B from having sex without condom.
2. The only way to know I have hepatitis B is when skin becomes yellow.
3. You can protect yourself from getting hepatitis B by taking vitamins and eating healthy food.
4. You should get tested if you have had a tattoo overseas and are not sure if the equipment used was clean.

Important messages to take away

- ✓ Hepatitis B is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus
- ✓ Chronic hepatitis B (long term) is common in our communities
- ✓ Chronic hepatitis B is passed on from mother to child at birth
- ✓ The only way to know if you have hepatitis B is to get a hepatitis B blood test
- ✓ Treatment is available. It is safe and effective
- ✓ Without treatment chronic hepatitis B can lead to liver damage and liver cancer.





Questions?

Developed by:

NSW Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service

(MHAHS) mhahs.org.au

August 2025



MULTICULTURAL HIV
AND HEPATITIS SERVICE

