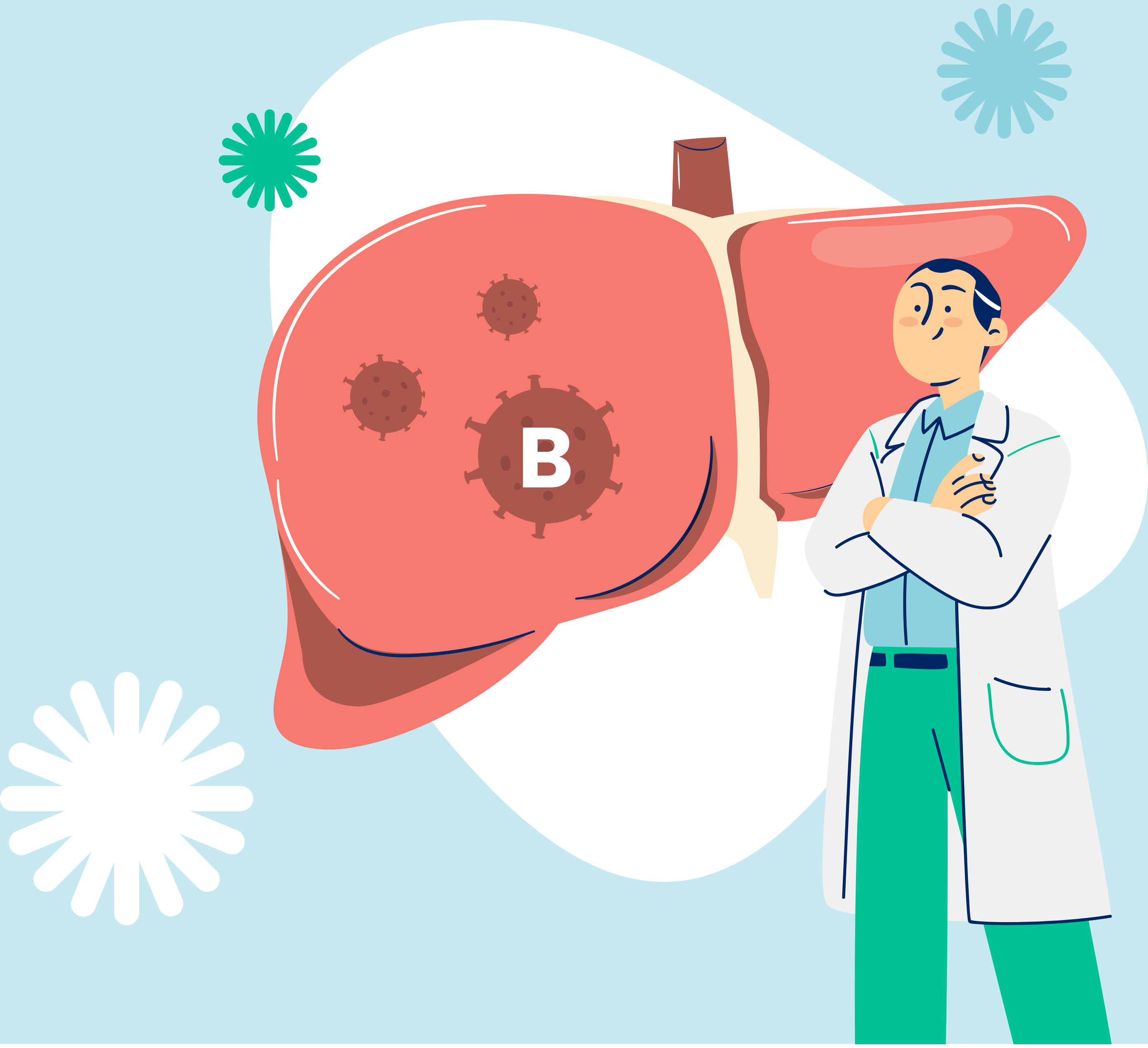
Facilitator Guide 2025

Understanding Hepatitis B



MULTICULTURAL HIV AND HEPATITIS SERVICE

NSW GOVERNMENT

Statement of acknowledgement

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work, and I pay my respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging. I recognise their ongoing connection to land, water, and community, and I honour their rich cultural heritage and contributions.

Artwork
Ngurang Dali Mana Burudi — a place to get better

The map was created by our Aboriginal Health staff telling the story of a cultural pathway for our community to gain better access to healthcare.

Artwork by Aboriginal artist Lee Hampton utilising our story.

Contents

Introduction

The **Understanding Hepatitis B** education package was created by the NSW Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS) as part of the broader Blood Borne Virus (BBV), Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI), and Liver Health community education toolkits, designed specifically for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

There is a series of five education packages including:

- Understanding Hepatitis B
- Understanding Hepatitis C
- Understanding Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
- Understanding Sexually Transmissible Infections (STIs)
- Understanding Liver Health

Each education package is designed to be delivered independently from the others, and all include a facilitator's guide (PDF) and a slide presentation (PowerPoint or PDF) available on the MHAHS website – www.mhahs.org.au.

The information provided in the **Understanding Hepatitis B** education package aims to:

- Increase participant awareness and knowledge about hepatitis B prevention, testing, and treatment.
- Promote regular testing for people at risk of getting hepatitis B
- Encourage participants and their communities to access NSW healthcare services
- Address misinformation and stigma that people may have about hepatitis B
- Provide participants and their communities with accurate, up-to-date information
- Provide links to health and support services across NSW.

About the MHAHS

The NSW MHAHS supports people from diverse cultural and language backgrounds across New South Wales to address HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and sexual health. It works with communities to provide information, education, and support to improve access to health care for all.

The NSW MHAHS also partners with health services and community organisations to provide culturally tailored health education and multilingual programs to empower communities with knowledge and tools they need to navigate the health care system confidently.

NSW MHAHS is hosted by Sydney Local Health District.

Email: info@mhahs.org.au

MULTICULTURAL HIV
AND HEPATITIS SERVICE

About the facilitator guide

This facilitator guide is a practical resource to support individuals and organisations in delivering the **Understanding Hepatitis B** community education sessions to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities across NSW using the accompanying slide presentation.

The guide is designed to help facilitators provide participants with information about hepatitis B in a simple and clear way. It equips facilitators with the knowledge and resources needed to run sessions that are supportive, non-judgmental, and informative.

This guide provides facilitators with clear instructions for delivering community education sessions. It includes step-by-step support for presenting each part of the slide presentation, making easy to follow and deliver. Each slide includes detailed and structured notes to guide facilitators in delivering the session.

It includes:

- Presentation slides covering essential information on hepatitis B
- Facilitator notes with key talking points and explanations for each slide including references
- Instructions for facilitating discussions and engaging participants
- Activity suggestions to promote active learning and participation
- Sample evaluation form for gathering participant feedback after the session
- A glossary explaining various terms relating to hepatitis B
- Links to multilingual resources and further information.

By using this guide, facilitators can:

- Explain hepatitis B – what it is, how it is transmitted and the health effects on individuals
- Encourage participants and their communities to get tested and treated
- Clarify common myths and reduce stigma surrounding hepatitis B
- Guide participants on where to access hepatitis B testing, treatment, and support.

Who is this information for?

The information in the education session is for CALD community members (adults and young people). The education session is available in a range of community languages including Arabic, Bengali, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Indonesian, Korean, Mongolian, Samoan, Tongan and Vietnamese.

Who can facilitate the education session?

The facilitator guide has been developed to prepare and support the facilitator delivering the community education session.

The information in the guide is designed for anyone interested in learning about hepatitis B and who is interested in educating others. Education sessions can be delivered by bilingual facilitators with an interest in raising awareness about BBVs, STIs and liver health in their community. Ideally, facilitators should have experience in delivering community education It is also important for facilitators to be aware of the sensitive topics and cultural considerations that may arise during the session.

No prior medical knowledge is required and this guide provides all necessary information for facilitators to confidently deliver the session.

Preparing to deliver community education sessions

To effectively deliver the community education sessions, it is recommended that facilitators:

- Familiarise themselves with the content of both the slide presentation and the facilitator guide
- Consider translating the talking points written in italics under each slide into your language
- Read the recommended articles and visit the suggested websites
- Practise delivering the content to ensure smooth delivery and familiarity with the flow of the session
- Test equipment to make sure it is set up and working properly before the session begins.

These steps will help facilitators feel more confident and prepared to deliver an informative session.

How long is needed to deliver the education session?

The slide presentation contains a lot of information, so please adapt the content from the slides and facilitator guide to best suit your group's needs.

While the recommended duration for the education session is 30-45 minutes, this can be adjusted depending on your audience and the setting.

If possible, remain available after the session to address any additional questions. Facilitators have the flexibility to shorten or extend the session by focusing on key slides or incorporating more time for discussion.

What is the delivery mode of the education session?

The education session can be delivered in various formats:

- **Face-to-face:** ideal for community gatherings, workplaces, and group sessions
- **Virtual or webinar format:** facilitators can deliver the session via Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or any other virtual platforms
- **Mixed approach:** it can be a combination of in-person and virtual delivery for broader accessibility.

Regardless of the delivery method, facilitators are encouraged to make sessions interactive and engaging, allowing participants to ask questions and share experiences.

Talking about BBVs, STIs and Liver Health

When discussing BBVs (HIV, hepatitis B and C), STIs, and liver health, it is important to approach the conversation with cultural sensitivity, empathy, and accurate information.

The information around these topics can be very sensitive, particularly for people from CALD communities as discussing sexual health may be considered uncomfortable or a taboo in some communities.

Many people may have concerns about stigma, discrimination, or misunderstandings related to these topics. Facilitators should create a safe and respectful environment where participants feel comfortable discussing and learning about BBVs, STIs and liver health.

Sensitivities

It is important for facilitators to recognise that these topics can be difficult for some people and that participants or their loved ones may have personal experiences related to BBVs, STIs, or liver health. It's also important to use non-judgmental language and remind everyone that the session focuses on health and well-being.

Privacy and confidentiality should always be respected, and participants should be assured they don't have to share personal experiences unless they choose to. Facilitators should use inclusive and culturally appropriate language and adjust their language to suit the audience's literacy levels, keeping everything simple and clear.

Stigma and discrimination

When planning the education sessions, consider that many people with BBVs, STIs or poor liver health may experience stigma and discrimination. This can prevent them from seeking testing, treatment, and support. Facilitators need to understand that stigma can come from fear, misinformation, and cultural beliefs.

The community education sessions:

- Emphasise that BBVs, STIs and poor liver health are medical conditions that can be cured or treated and managed and prevented in many cases
- Explain that stigma creates barriers for people to access healthcare. This can increase the risk of passing on to other people
- Educate participants on the facts about transmission and prevention to challenge myths and misconceptions
- Address concerns about confidentiality by explaining that testing and treatment services are private and professional
- Promote an inclusive and respectful discussion, avoiding any blame or shame.

Common risk factors and barriers specific to CALD populations

- Limited access to healthcare due to language barriers, migration status, and lack of familiarity with the healthcare system or financial constraints can prevent people from getting tested, treatment and support.
- Cultural beliefs and stigma: In some cultures, discussions around sexual health, BBVs, and STIs may be considered taboo, leading to avoidance or delayed testing and treatment.
- Lack of culturally appropriate health information about BBVs, STIs and liver health.
- Different health beliefs and traditional medicine practices, which may impact engagement with mainstream healthcare services.
- Increased vulnerability due to migration experiences, such as trauma, displacement, or lack of stable housing.
- Having been born or have lived in country where BBVs are common.
- Fear of stigma and judgment from family, community, or healthcare providers.
- Mistrust of the healthcare system, especially among newly arrived migrants or refugees.
- The lack of symptoms for some of the BBVs, STIs and liver diseases which leads people to believe they do not need to be tested.

Planning for the information session

Facilitators or organisations should take the time to prepare the materials they need, book a venue, and promote the education session to groups of people who might be interested in the topic.

The following checklist will help you organise your session.

Action	Tick off
Booking a venue	
Consider the number of participants to match the seating availability.	
Choose a comfortable, accessible location that suits your audience (e.g., community centre, library, health service, or online platform for virtual sessions).	
Ensure the venue has the necessary facilities (Wi-Fi, projector, seating, parking, toilets, fire emergency exits, accessibility for people with disabilities, etc.).	
Promoting the session via your networks	
Advertise the session through community groups, social media, local health services, and word-of-mouth.	
Use multilingual flyers, posters, or digital invitations if necessary	
If applicable, partner with local organisations that engage with the target community.	
Consider the gender make up – is there a preference for male only or female only groups?	
Consider any cultural or religious key dates when you plan the session (e.g. is it a fasting period?).	
What you will need for the information session	
Equipment • Laptop (if presenting slides or playing videos). • Projector or TV screen (for in-person sessions). • Microphone/speaker system (for larger venues). • Internet access (if sharing online resources).	
Presentation Materials • PowerPoint presentation (PPT) and facilitator manual (digital or printed copies). • Printed handouts for participants (if relevant). • Evaluation forms (in English and other relevant languages).	
Name Tags (for in-person sessions) • Helps create a welcoming and interactive environment. • Use name stickers or pre-printed name tags if needed.	

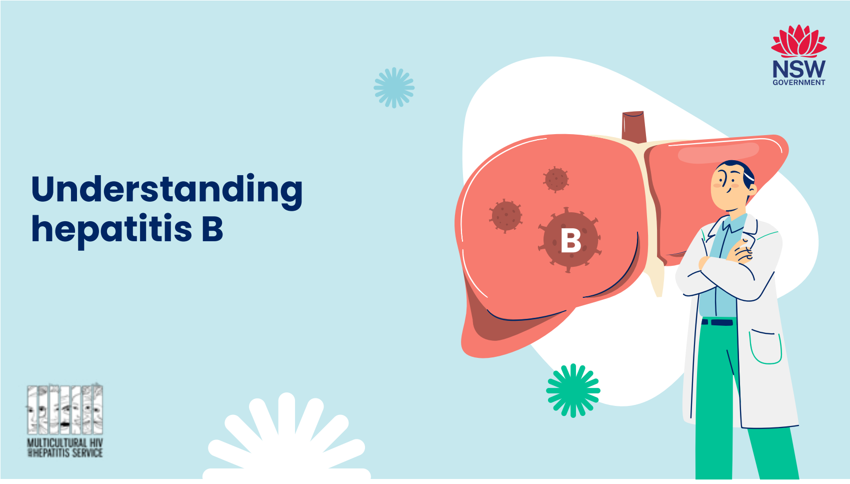
Planning for the information session (cont...)

Action	Tick off
What you will need for the information session	
Stationery • Pens, markers, and paper for note-taking, activities, or participant feedback. • Whiteboard or flipchart (if using for group discussions).	
Multilingual Resources • Printed or digital fact sheets and brochures on BBVs, STIs, liver health and available health services. • Interpreter information (e.g., contact details for TIS National). • Links to multicultural health services such as MHAHS for further support.	

Key takeaways for facilitators:

- **Clear Information:** Use simple, straightforward language to explain hepatitis B and its impact on health.
- **Empathy:** Approach sensitive topics with understanding and without judgment.
- **Engagement:** Create a safe and open space for participants to ask questions and share their experiences.
- **Action:** Encourage participants to get tested, vaccinated, and access support as needed

Slide 1



Understanding hepatitis B

Facilitator instruction

- Welcome the group to the education session

  Good [morning/afternoon/evening] everyone, and welcome to today's session.

- Introduce yourself to the group

  My name is [Your Name], and I work as [Your Role] at [Your Workplace].
  It's great to have you all here.

- Provide an acknowledgement of the Country

  Before we begin, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today. I pay my respects to Elders past, present, and emerging and recognize the importance of cultural heritage in health and wellbeing.

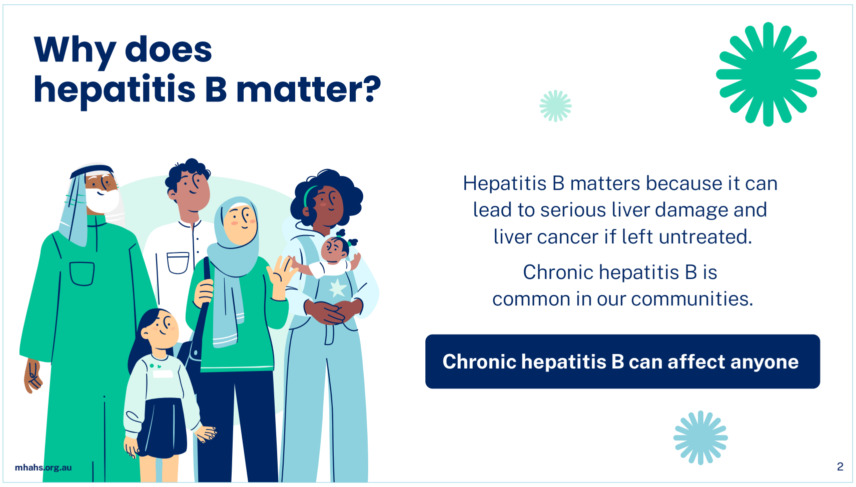
- Explain any housekeeping information, e.g. evacuation procedures, location of bathrooms, finishing time, any rules, etc

- Explain that if anyone feels uncomfortable with any information in this session, they are welcome to excuse themselves.

  This session is about understanding hepatitis B. We'll be discussing for example, how hepatitis B affects the liver, how it is transmitted, who should get tested, available treatments, and ways to prevent it. This is a safe space to learn and ask questions, and we encourage open discussion. However, if at any point you feel uncomfortable, you are welcome to step out or speak with me privately after the session.

  Now, let's get started.

Slide 2



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

Facilitator notes:

Discussion:

Ask: *Why do you think hepatitis B matters?*

(Check their understanding around the importance of learning about hepatitis B. Acknowledge their feedback and if necessary, take notes on a whiteboard or flipchart)

Answer: ***Hepatitis B matters because it can cause serious liver damage, liver cancer, and even death if left untreated.***

- *Hepatitis B is an important health issue that affects millions of people worldwide.*
- *If left untreated can lead to liver failure and liver cancer.*
- *Chronic hepatitis B is common in our communities and can affect anyone.*
- *The good news is that there are safe and effective treatments for chronic hepatitis B.*
- *A vaccine is available for hepatitis B.*
- *The vaccine is safe and effective and helps prevent the spread of hepatitis B in the communities.*
- *The vaccine is widely available, and I encourage you to talk to a doctor about getting the hepatitis B vaccine.*
- *In Australia, all newborn babies are vaccinated for hepatitis B.*

Slide 3

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

mhahs.org.au

Facilitator notes:

Now that we understand why hepatitis B matters, let's have a look at what we'll be covering in today's session.

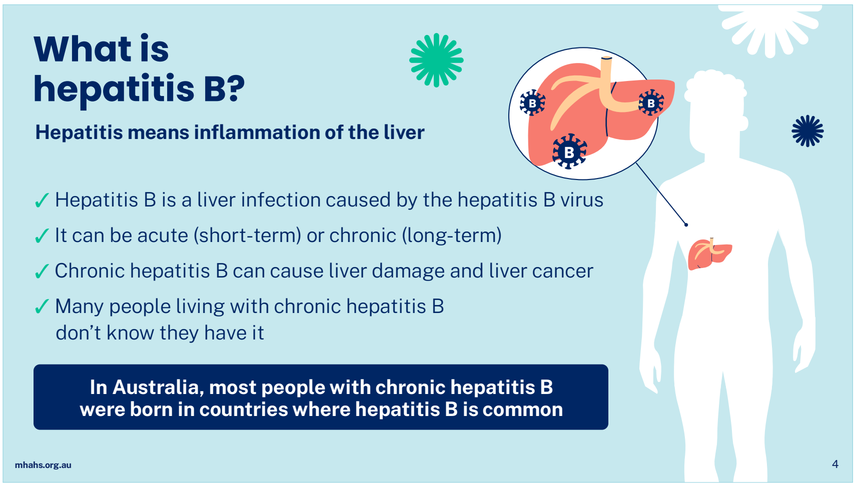
- *We will start with the basics, what you need to know about hepatitis B, including what it is and how it affects the liver with a focus on chronic hepatitis B (long term hepatitis B).*
- *Next, we will discuss how hepatitis B is transmitted and possible symptoms.*
- *We will then talk about who should get tested, where and how testing can be done. Testing is the only way to know for sure if someone has hepatitis B, so we want to make sure everyone knows their options.*
- *After that, we'll talk about treatment and prevention.*
- *We will also cover the sensitive topic of who to tell and not tell about your hepatitis B status. Knowing your rights and privacy options is essential.*
- *Finally, we will share resources on where you can get more information and support if you need it.*

If you have any questions along the way, please feel free to ask.

At the end of this session, please take a moment to fill in an evaluation form to helps us improve future education sessions.

Let's get started.

Slide 4



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

mhahs.org.au

4

Facilitator notes:

Discussion:

Ask: *Before we go ahead with this slide, let me ask you a quick question, do you know where the liver is in your body?*

(Give time for them to answer it and acknowledge everyone's answers)

Answer: *Yes, it's in the upper right side of your abdomen or stomach, just behind your lower ribs.*

Ask: *Now, here's another question, do you know what the largest organ in the human body is? Take a guess.*

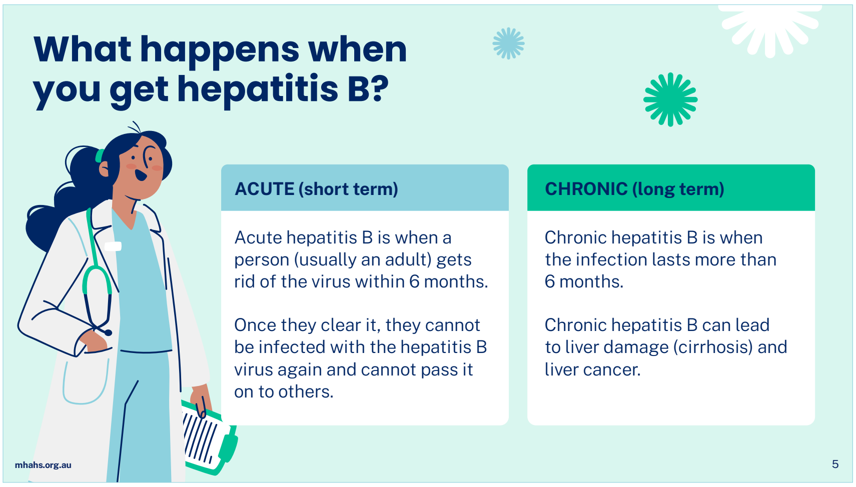
(Acknowledge everyone's answers, someone may say the liver)

Answer: *The liver is one of the largest organs in the body, weighing about 1.5 kg. But the largest organ isn't inside our body, it's our skin.*

Now, let's talk about what hepatitis B is.

- *Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver. Inflammation is a natural way your body reacts when you're hurt or sick.*
- *Hepatitis B is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus.*
- *It affects the liver and can be either acute, meaning short-term, or chronic, meaning long-term.*
- *Chronic hepatitis B can lead to serious liver damage, cirrhosis, and even liver cancer.*
- *Many people living with hepatitis B don't even know they have it, because it often doesn't cause symptoms until there is significant liver damage.*
- *Hepatitis B is quite common in Australia, particularly among people who were born in countries where the virus is widespread. This is because hepatitis B is often passed from mother to child at birth or through close contact in early childhood.*

Slide 5



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.

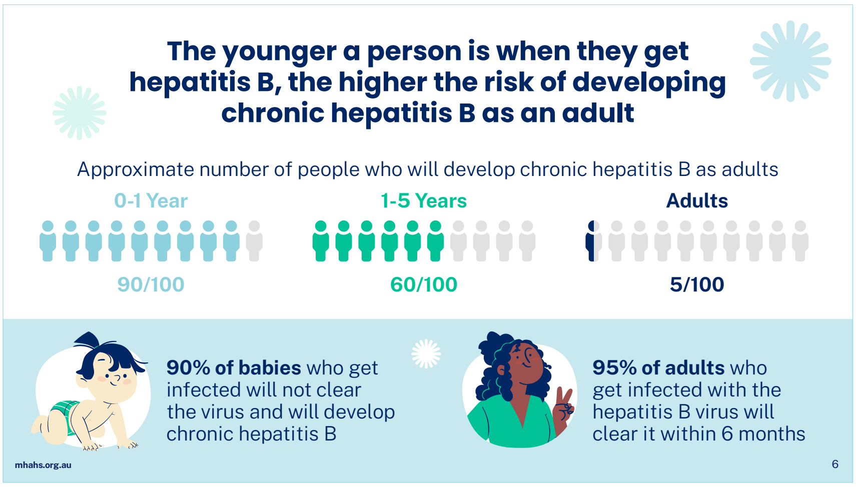
Chronic hepatitis B can lead to liver damage (cirrhosis) and liver cancer.

Facilitator notes:

Let’s have a look at what happens when someone has hepatitis B by explaining in more details the differences between these two: acute and chronic hepatitis B.

- *Hepatitis B can be acute (short term) or chronic (long term).*
- *Most adults who get hepatitis B will get rid of the virus (clear it) within 6 months and develop protection against it. Once they clear it, they cannot be infected with the hepatitis B virus again and cannot pass it on to others. This is called acute hepatitis B.*
- *When the infection lasts for more than 6 months, the person has developed chronic hepatitis B.*
- *Chronic hepatitis B can lead to liver damage (cirrhosis) and liver cancer.*
- *The good news is that while there is no cure for hepatitis B, there are effective treatments available. Medications can help keep the virus under control and protect the liver.*

Slide 6



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

0-1 Year	1-5 Years	Adults
90/100	60/100	5/100

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

---

Facilitator notes:

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

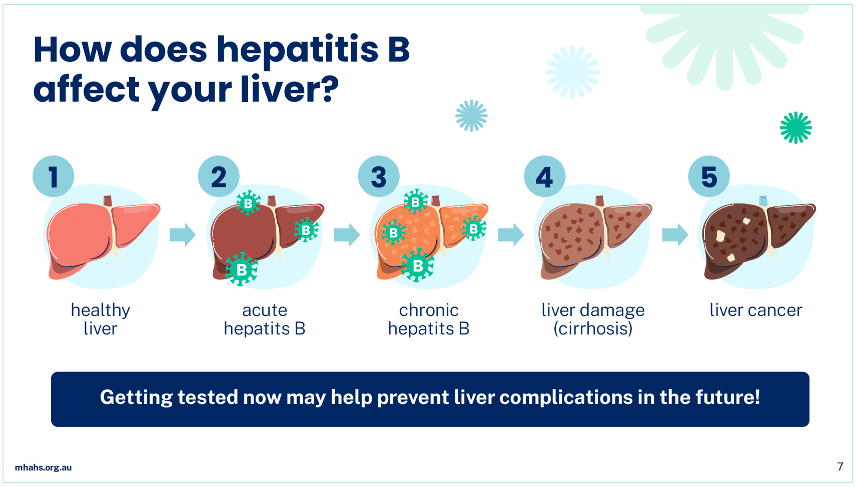
- *If a baby gets the hepatitis B virus, the risk of developing chronic hepatitis B is 90%. That means, 90 out 100 (or 9 out 10) babies will have the hepatitis B virus in their body for a long time.*
- *Now, if a child aged between 1 to 5 years gets the hepatitis B virus there is a 60% of developing chronic hepatitis B, that means 60 out 100 (or 6 out 10) children will develop chronic hepatitis B.*
- *If an adult gets the virus, the risk of developing chronic hepatitis B is less than 5%, that is 5 out of 100.*
- *Babies are at very high risk of developing chronic hepatitis B as the baby's immune system is still immature. It is not strong enough to get rid of (clear) the virus, so the infection tends to continue.*
- *In Australia, all pregnant women are tested for hepatitis B and all newborns receive the hepatitis B vaccine at birth – and 3 more vaccines at 2, 4 and 6 months of age – so all babies are protected.*

We will talk more about the vaccine later in the presentation.

The majority of people living with chronic hepatitis B in Australia were born overseas and got hepatitis B when they were babies or young children, before the vaccine existed.

This is why it is important to talk about it and raise awareness in our communities.

Slide 7



How does hepatitis B affect your liver?

1 healthy liver

2 acute hepatits B

3 chronic hepatits B

4 liver damage (cirrhosis)

5 liver cancer

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

mhahs.org.au

7

Facilitator notes:

Now, let's look at how hepatitis B affects the liver over time.

- *The liver is one of the most important organs in our body. It processes nutrients, helps with digestion, and removes toxins from our system. But when the liver is infected with the hepatitis B virus, it can become inflamed and damaged.*
- *This slide shows the different stages of liver disease caused by hepatitis B.*
- *Let's go through them stage by stage.*

Stage 1: *A healthy liver can function normally by breaking down food, storing energy, and helping with digestion.*

Stage 2: *The second stage shows what happens after infection. This is called acute hepatitis B (short term). Soon after the hepatitis B virus enters the body through the blood stream, it attacks the liver cells and cause inflammation of the liver (hepatitis). But in most healthy adults, the immune system can fight off the virus within six months.*

Stage 3: *In the third stage, the immune system can't get rid of the virus within 6 months and the infection becomes chronic (long term). This means the virus remains in the body for a long time, continuing to cause the scarring of the liver. This scarring is called liver fibrosis. At this stage, a person may not have any symptoms, but the damage is slowly progressing.*

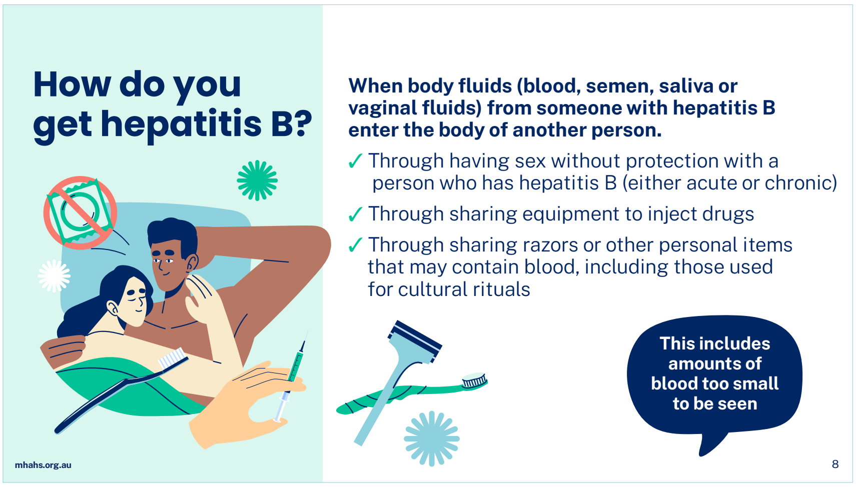
Stage 4: *If chronic hepatitis B is not treated, fibrosis can lead to cirrhosis. Cirrhosis is when so much scarring occurs that the liver can no longer function properly. The liver becomes stiff, making it harder for blood to flow through it, which can lead to liver cancer. At this stage, a person may start experiencing extreme tiredness, swelling in the legs, and / or yellowing of the skin and eyes (also known as jaundice)*

Stage 5: *And finally, this last image shows that if hepatitis B continues to damage the liver, it can cause serious liver disease or liver cancer. Unfortunately, liver cancer doesn't often show any symptoms until at an advanced stage.*

So, it's important for people with hepatitis B to get medical care and regular screening tests.

Does anyone have any questions before we move on to the next slide?

Slide 8



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

Facilitator notes:

As you already know by now, hepatitis B virus spreads through blood and body fluids, such as vaginal fluids, semen. So, adults can get hepatitis B by:

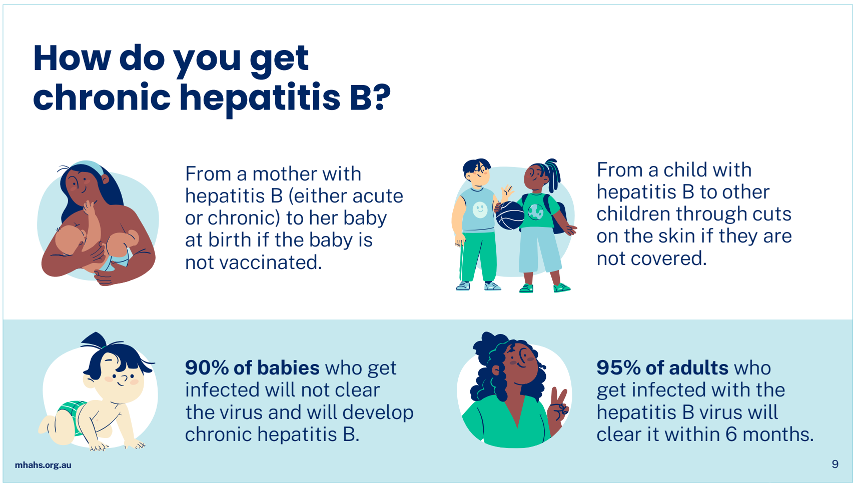
- *Having sex without a condom.*
- *Sharing and reusing any equipment used for injecting drugs or steroids that are not sterilized or clean.*
- *Sharing razor blades, toothbrushes or any other personal items which may have blood on them, including items used for cultural rituals.*

The Hepatitis B virus can survive outside the body for up to 7 days, so even a tiny amount of infected blood on personal items can be enough to spread the virus.

If time permits you may add that it's also possible to get hepatitis B from:

- Sharing unsterilised medical, dental and cosmetic procedures and vaccinations overseas when you're not sure the equipment used was sterilised or nor clean.
- Unsterilised tattooing and body piercing: Ensure that any equipment used is sterilised and handled by trained professionals.
- Accidental needle-stick injury: Some people, like healthcare workers, are more likely to get a needlestick injury, which happens when a used needle accidentally punctures the skin.

Slide 9



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.

mhahs.org.au

9

Facilitator notes:

We discussed how hepatitis B virus spreads through body fluids, now we'll talk about chronic hepatitis B virus.

In Australia, people who are at the highest risk of having chronic hepatitis B are:

- *People born in a country/region where hepatitis B is common.*
- *Most people with chronic hepatitis B from these countries were infected at birth.*
- *People whose mother had acute or chronic hepatitis B and who were born prior to universal infant hepatitis B vaccination.*
- *People living with HIV and viral hepatitis.*

The most common way children can get hepatitis B is from their mother during childbirth. A mother who has acute or chronic hepatitis B can pass the virus to her baby at birth if the baby is not vaccinated.

- *Children can also get hepatitis B from other children. For example, if a child with hepatitis B has uncovered cuts and bruises and there is skin to skin contact with another child.*
- *As I explained earlier, if the virus is passed on to a baby, the risk of developing chronic hepatitis B is very high, 90%. This means, 9 out 10 babies have the chance of developing chronic hepatitis B.*

Does anyone have any questions at this point?

Slide 10

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 bathroom and toilet

Swimming pools

Facilitator notes:

People living with either acute or chronic hepatitis B cannot pass on the infection to others by any of these ways.

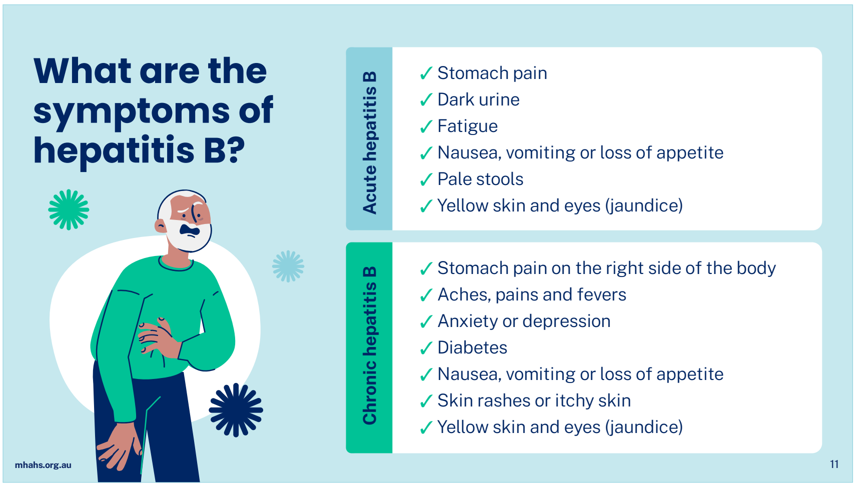
You cannot get hepatitis B:

- *If someone who lives with hepatitis B coughs or sneezes near you*
- *The same if they hug, kiss or hold your hands*
- *Mosquito or other insects don’t pass on hepatitis B if they bite your skin*
- *You can’t get hepatitis B either by sharing food with people who has hepatitis B, or using the same forks and knives, or drinking from the same glasses*
- *It’s also not possible either to get hepatitis B by sharing bathroom or toilet or swimming pools.*

In our communities, there is confusion about how hepatitis B is passed on. People living with chronic hepatitis B experience discrimination and isolation. This is not necessary and is not acceptable in Australia. We have to open up and talk about hepatitis B, to take care of ourselves and our loved ones.

- *It is our responsibility to learn about this and ensure people living with chronic hepatitis B are no longer in fear to open up and ask for help.*
- *It is very important that they are supported by family and community.*

Slide 11



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)

mhahs.org.au

Facilitator notes:

As we discussed earlier, hepatitis B can be acute (short term) and chronic (long term). It's important to know that many people with hepatitis B may not have any symptoms at all, that is why testing for hepatitis B more regularly is important.

- *The symptoms of acute hepatitis B usually appear 2 or 3 months after the infection and can last for a few weeks. In most cases, the immune system clears the virus on its own, and the person recovers. However, this doesn't mean the virus has completely disappeared, and in some cases, it can progress to chronic hepatitis B.*
- *The **symptoms for acute hepatitis B** can be these ones listed on the slide:*
  - *Stomach pain – discomfort or pain in the abdomen*
  - *Dark urine – urine that appears darker than usual*
  - *Fatigue – feeling extremely tired*
  - *Nausea, vomiting, or loss of appetite – not feeling hungry or feeling sick*
  - *Pale stools – light-coloured bowel movements*
  - *Yellow skin and eyes (jaundice) – a yellowing of the skin and the whites of the eyes*

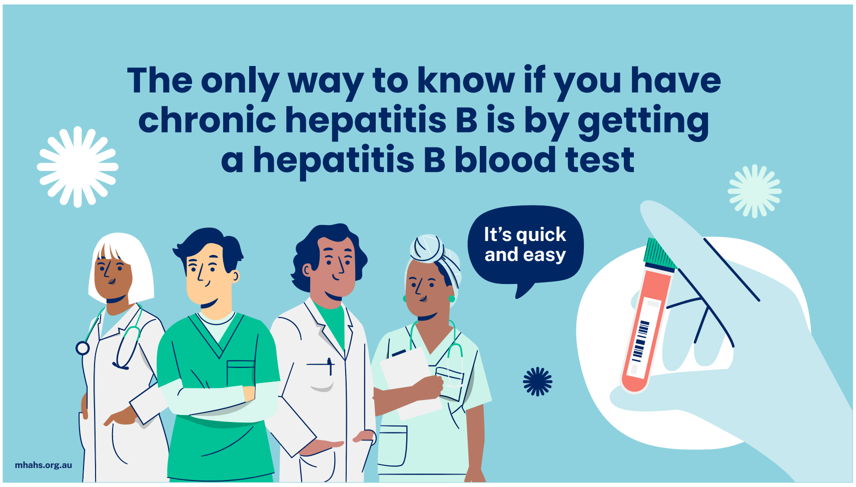
If hepatitis B lasts longer than 6 months, it becomes chronic. Many people with chronic hepatitis B feel perfectly fine and may not have any symptoms for years.

- *The **symptoms for chronic hepatitis B** can be:*
  - *Stomach pain – especially on the right side of the body, where the liver is located*
  - *Aches, pains, and fevers – flu-like symptoms*
  - *Anxiety or depression – emotional distress due to long-term illness*
  - *Diabetes – increased risk of blood sugar problems*
  - *Nausea, vomiting, or loss of appetite – ongoing digestive issues*
  - *Skin rashes or itchy skin – unexplained rashes or irritation*
  - *Yellow skin and eyes (jaundice) – a sign of liver damage*

  Many people with chronic hepatitis B don't feel sick or show any symptoms. That's why it's often called a "silent disease." The only way to know if someone has it is by doing a simple blood test.

Does anyone have any questions about symptoms?

Slide 12



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

---

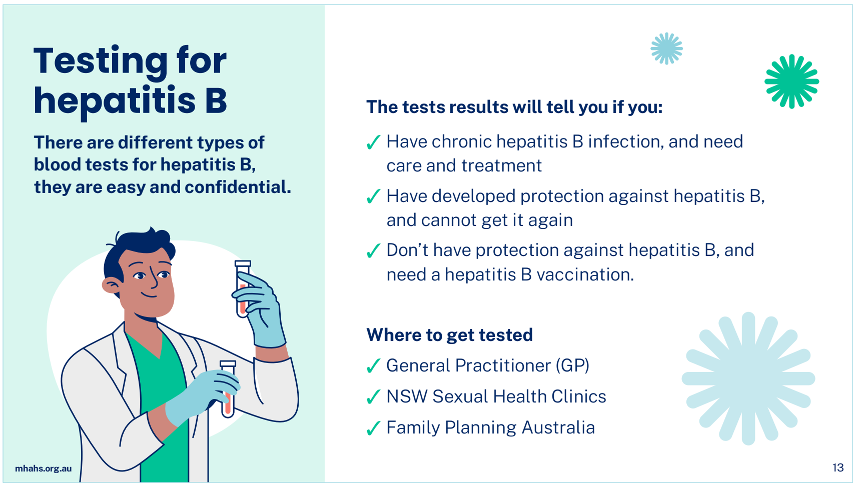
Facilitator notes:

The important message from this slide is whether you have symptoms or not, the only way to know if you have hepatitis B is by getting a hepatitis B blood test.

Finding out early if you have hepatitis B can help you prevent serious health complications like liver cirrhosis and liver cancer.

- *Chronic hepatitis B is common in our communities, because the prevalence in our country of birth is very high. This is because it has been passed on before vaccinations were available.*
- *You may not know they are living with chronic hepatitis B, as the symptoms take many years to appear.*
- *You can't tell if someone has hepatitis B just by looking at them.*
- *Undiagnosed and untreated, chronic hepatitis B can lead to liver damage, cirrhosis and liver cancer.*
- *The only way to know if you have chronic hepatitis B is by getting a hepatitis B blood test. Testing is quick and easy.*
- *By testing early, you have better a chance to control the disease and live a long and healthy life.*

Slide 13



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

Facilitator notes:

Testing for hepatitis B is simple, confidential, and it just involves a simple blood test.

Your doctor or your liver specialist will order a few different blood tests to check for hepatitis B in your blood. These tests will show if you:

- *Have chronic hepatitis B infection now and need treatment.*
- *Have ever had hepatitis B in the past and your body has built up protection. This is called immunity, and it could have been either from getting over a past infection or from being vaccinated.*
- *Don't have protection against hepatitis B and need a hepatitis B vaccination.*

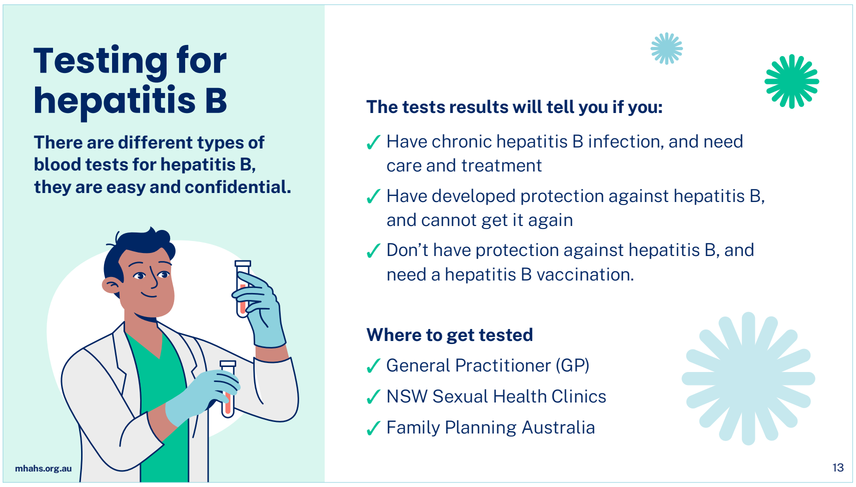
Discussion: about the different tests is optional. It will depend on time and the level of audience participation and interest. See information below.

Now that we understand the importance of hepatitis B testing, let's discuss where you can get tested.

- *You can ask your General Practitioner (GP) or doctor for a hepatitis B blood test. Remember that this test is not included in your routine check-ups, so you need to specifically request it.*
  - *The test is free if you have a Medicare Card.*
  - *If your doctor bulk bills, there is no cost for the consultation or the blood test. But if your doctor doesn't bulk bill, you may only need to pay a consultation fee.*

  (Bulkbilling is a payment option that patients have under the Medicare system. It allows doctors to bill or charge Medicare directly for their services not the patient.)
- *You can call **Family Planning NSW Talkline** on 1300 658 886 if you have any questions about hepatitis B and to book for a hepatitis B test or you can visit their website www.fpnsw.org.au to find a clinic near you.*
- *At NSW sexual health clinics the hepatitis B test is free, easy and confidential.*
  - *You don't need a Medicare Card to do the test, and you may not need to give your real name.*
  - *You can find sexual health clinics in various locations around Sydney and NSW. Please, call the Sexual Health Infolink on 1800 451 624 or go to the NSW Health website, and search for sexual health clinics to find a clinic near you.*

Slide 13 cont...



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

mhahs.org.au

13

Facilitator notes:

Does anyone have any questions before we move to the next slide?

Additional information

The information below is about the different types of tests.

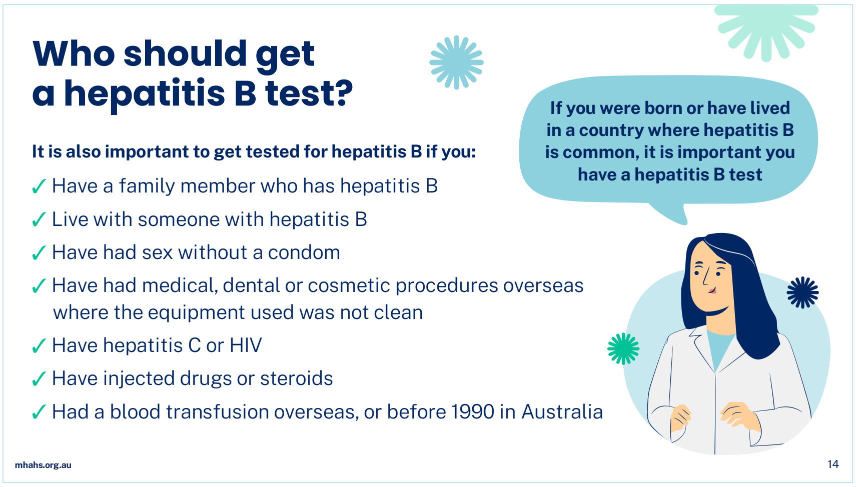
1. Hepatitis B Surface Antigen (HBsAg) Test
   - This test checks if you currently have hepatitis B and may need treatment.
2. Hepatitis B Core Antibody (anti-HBc) Test
   - This test shows if you've been exposed to hepatitis B either recently or in the past.
   - A positive result means you have been in contact with the virus at some point in your life.
   - If the result is positive but the first test (for surface antigen) is negative, it means that naturally you've developed protection against hepatitis B, and are immune for life (can't get it again)
3. Hepatitis B Surface Antibody (anti-HBs) Test
   - This test shows if you are immune to hepatitis B.
   - A positive result means you have immunity, either from vaccination or from recovering from a past infection.

If all three tests come back negative, it means you have no immunity and are not protected, so should get vaccinated to prevent hepatitis B.

If your test comes back positive, don't panic.

- Many people live long and healthy lives with proper treatment and care.
- It's important to do a regular check-up to monitor your liver health and determine if treatment is needed.
- It's also important to inform your close contacts, such as family members or partners, so they can get tested and vaccinated if needed.

Slide 14



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

mhahs.org.au

14

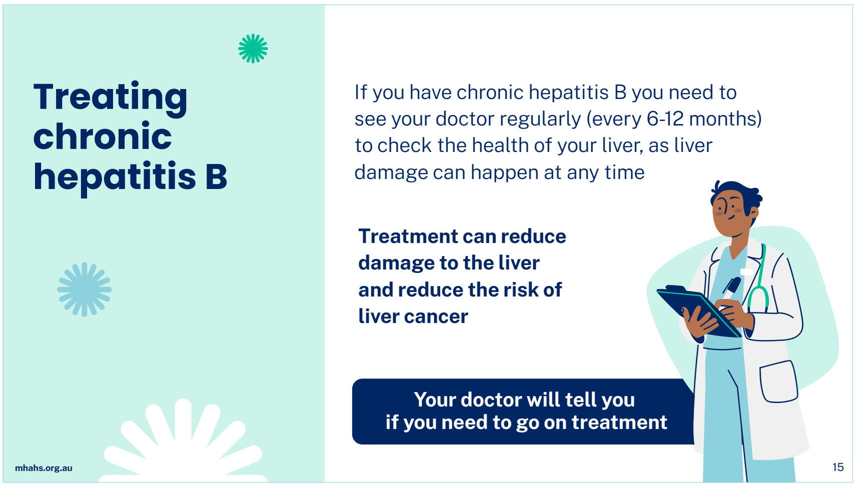
Facilitator notes:

Now let’s a have a look at who should get tested for hepatitis B:

- *People who were born or have lived in countries where hepatitis B is common or where babies and children have no free hepatitis B vaccines. In many cases, people with chronic hepatitis B from these countries may have been infected at birth and don’t know it.*
- *People whose parents or a family member have hepatitis B, liver disease or liver cancer.*
- *People who live with someone who has hepatitis B or had a sexual partner with hepatitis B.*
- *People who have had a medical or dental procedure overseas, in countries where equipment is not sterilised (cleaned) properly.*
- *People who are living with HIV or hepatitis C virus.*
- *People who have had vaginal or anal sex without a condom, particularly men who have sex with men.*
- *People who have injected drugs or steroids*
- *People who had a blood transfusion overseas, or before 1990 in Australia.*
- *People who work in high-risk occupational settings such as healthcare, correctional facilities, laboratories, mortuaries, ambulance or police services.*

Does anyone have any questions about who should have a hepatitis B test?
If not, we move on to the next slide to talk about treatment for hepatitis B.

Slide 15



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

mhahs.org.au

15

Facilitator notes:

What happens if the test shows that you have chronic hepatitis B? Let's discuss now what the treatment options are:

If you have been diagnosed with chronic hepatitis B, there's no cure yet, but there are effective treatments to help protect your liver and reduce the risk of liver cancer.

- *You'll need to see your doctor every 6 to 12 months to check how your liver is doing and if it's healthy even if you feel fine. Liver damage can happen at any time in your life.*
- *Your doctor or GP can manage this or refer you to a liver specialist if needed.*
- *The treatment or medication can help control the virus and protect the liver from getting sick or reduce the risk of liver cancer.*
- *Not everyone needs to take medication right away. Your doctor will tell you if you need to take medication.*
- *It is very important that people with chronic hepatitis B have regular monitoring of their liver function and stage of infection so that the need for treatment can be assessed.*

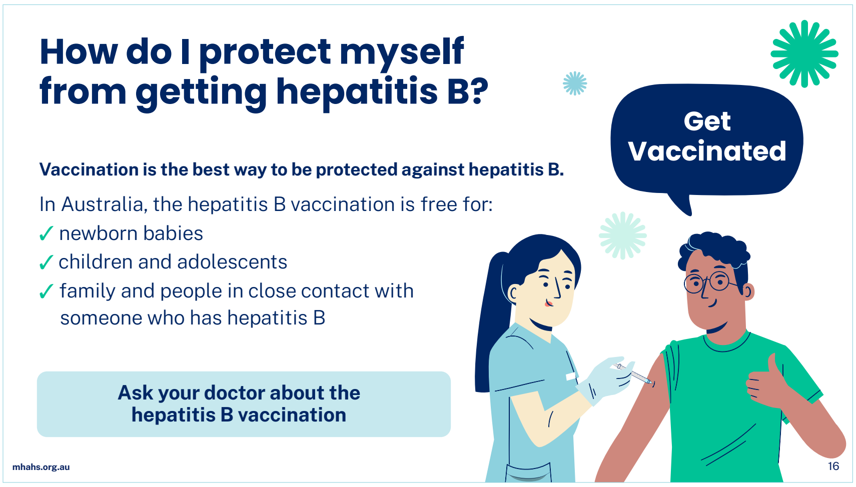
If anyone wants to know more about the types of hepatitis B medications, you can say:

- *They are antiviral tablets. You'll need to take them every day otherwise they won't work.*
- *These medicines work by stopping the virus from multiplying, reducing liver damage, and improving liver function.*

Most people who start the treatment will need to keep taking it for life. It's important to take your medication as your doctor instructed, without missing doses.

Next, we will discuss how to prevent hepatitis B. Before we move on, does anyone have any questions?

Slide 16



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

Facilitator notes:

Now that we've covered testing and treatment, let's talk about how we can prevent hepatitis B.

- *The best and most effective way to prevent hepatitis B is through vaccination.*
- *In Australia, the hepatitis B vaccine is safe, effective, and free for newborn babies, children and adolescents who are under 20 years old.*
- *Family and people who are in close contact with someone who has hepatitis B can also get free vaccination.*
- *You can ask your doctor or GP for more information about hepatitis B vaccination.*

If you are vaccinated, you cannot get the virus and help protect other people.
The more people who are vaccinated in our community, the less likely the disease will spread.

But before we move to the next slide, I'd like to ask you this question:

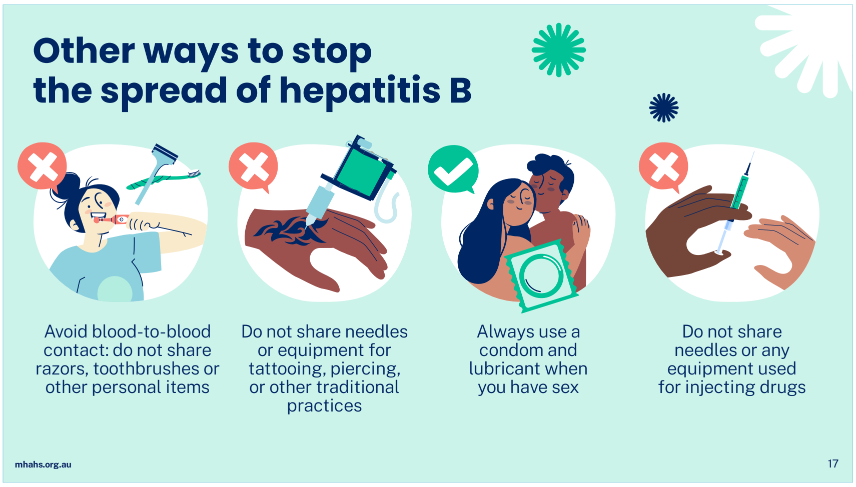
Discussion:

Ask: *Besides getting vaccinated, what are the other ways to protect yourself and the others from getting hepatitis B?*

(Give them some time for them, and acknowledge their answers, then you can answer the question)

Answer: *I'll show the answer on the next slide, so we can discuss more about it*

Slide 17



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

mhahs.org.au

17

Facilitator notes:

The other ways you can protect yourself from getting hepatitis B and stop its spread to other people is by:

- *Not sharing personal items that might have blood on them like razors, clippers, toothbrushes or any other personal items.*
- *Not sharing either needles or equipment for tattooing, piercing, or for other traditional practices that may be common in your community.*
- *If you don't know your partner's hepatitis B status always using a condom and water-based lubricant when you have vaginal or anal sex, particularly if you are a man who has sex with other men.*
- *Not sharing needles or any equipment for injecting drugs or steroids.*

Does anyone have any questions on how to stop the spread of hepatitis B virus to other people?

Slide 18

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

mhahs.org.au

18

Facilitator notes:

Now, let's talk about stigma and how it affects people living with hepatitis B.

- *Stigma is when people are treated unfairly or judged because of a health condition.*
- *Unfortunately, many people with hepatitis B experience stigma and discrimination*
- *Stigma often comes from misinformation or wrong assumptions about how someone got hepatitis B.*
- *Stigma can have serious impacts on people's lives, including fear of discrimination, delay in getting tested or treated, and emotional distress, anxiety, and depression.*
- *Some people are afraid to share meals or even be near someone with hepatitis B because they mistakenly believe they could catch it.*
- *This misinformation can cause isolation and emotional distress for those living with the virus.*
- *It is important that we educate ourselves and others to break down these myths.*
- *If someone you know has hepatitis B, you don't need to avoid them or change how you interact with them. Instead, support them to seek medical care and stay on top of their liver health.*
- *Hepatitis B is not spread through everyday casual contact.*
- *No one should feel ashamed or be treated unfairly for having hepatitis B.*
- *We all should help reduce stigma and discrimination by creating a supportive environment for those living with hepatitis B. It's about treating everyone with kindness, respect, and understanding.*

Next, we'll talk about who you should tell or not to tell that you have hepatitis B. But before we move on, does anyone have any questions about what we've just covered?

Slide 19

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 Defence Force
- ✓ When you apply for a visa to live in Australia
- ✓ If you are a health care worker who does medical procedure

You do not have to tell:

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

mhahs.org.au

19

Facilitator notes:

In Australia, there are laws that protect you from discrimination if you have hepatitis B because people should not treat you differently just because you have hepatitis B.

There are circumstances where you are legally required to disclose your status. This means when you must tell someone that you have hepatitis.

You must tell people:

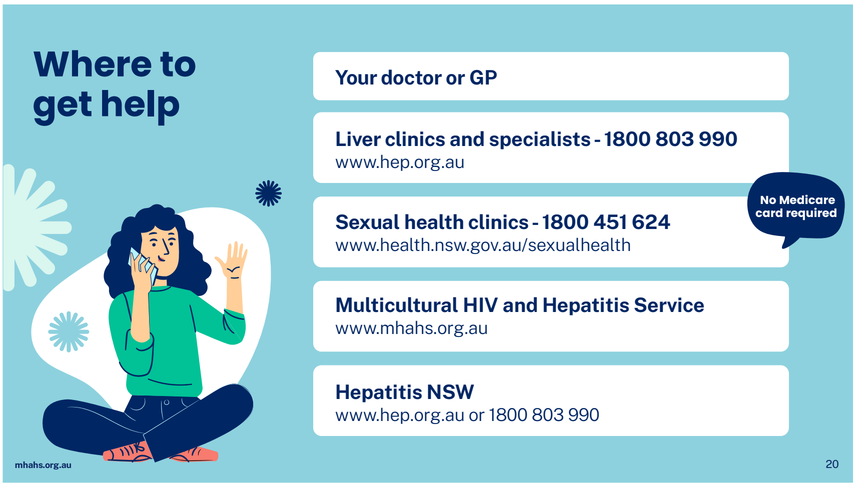
- *When you want to give blood or sperm, and if you want to donate your organs*
- *When you apply for some types of insurance, such as life insurance*
- *If you join the Australian Defence Force*
- *When you apply for a visa to live in Australia as part of the medical requirements.*

There are many situations where you do NOT have to tell people you have hepatitis B including:

- *Your employer, your boss, your colleagues or classmates. You don't have tell people at your workplace, or your school or university.*
- *Your family, friends and sexual partners BUT it's a good idea to let them know, so they can get tested and vaccinated as well.*
- *At a job interview*
- *Healthcare professionals, including your dentist. They already follow strict safety procedures to prevent infections from any bloodborne viruses.*

Does anyone have any questions, before we move on to the next slide?

Slide 20



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
www.hep.org.au or 1800 803 990

mhahs.org.au

20

Facilitator notes:

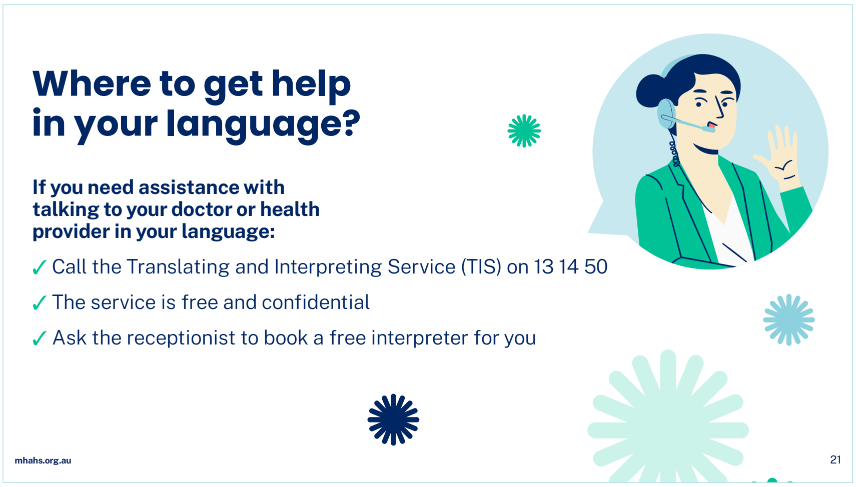
We have covered a lot of important information about hepatitis B today, and this slide gives you links and phone numbers where you can get help or more information. If you have a camera, I encourage you to take a photo of this slide.

- *Your GP or doctor is a good starting point. You can ask them for a hepatitis B blood test and discuss any concerns you may have.*
- *If you have been diagnosed or tested positive for hepatitis B your doctor will refer you to a liver specialist for ongoing monitoring and treatment. You can find a specialist or liver clinic by calling the Hepatitis Infoline at 1800 803 990 or visiting this webpage:* www.hep.org.au *You will still need a referral from your doctor.*
- *At NSW Sexual Health Clinics, you can get tested for hepatitis B. It is free, easy, and confidential. At these clinics, you don't need a Medicare card, and you don't have to give your real name if you don't want to. To find a clinic near you, call the NSW Sexual Health Infoline at 1800 451 624 or visit* www.health.nsw.gov.au/sexualhealth
- *If English is not your first language, you can find information about hepatitis B in other languages through the Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service by visiting this website: mhahs.org.au.*

If you or someone you know needs support, help is available. The most important step is to get tested and informed.

Does anyone have any questions before we move on?

Slide 21



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

Facilitator notes:

If you or someone you know need any help talking to your doctor or health care provider, you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50.

- *It is a free service.*
- *You call this number (13 14 50), say the language you need and an interpreter will help you communicate with a health service.*
- *You can request an interpreter when you need to speak to a doctor, specialist, or pharmacist.*
- *You can ask the receptionist at any healthcare service to book a free interpreter for you.*
- *All public health services in Australia can arrange an interpreter for you. You can also use TIS to book an appointment with a GP or specialist.*

Slide 22

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.

Facilitator notes:

Now, let's see how much we've learnt today in this workshop.

There are a lot of myths in community about how hepatitis B is passed on, and these myths can create fear, stigma, and discrimination.

Let's take a quick quiz to test what we know and what we've learned from today's session, so we can avoid those myths in our community.

I will read out these statements and I want you to raise your hand and tell me out loud if they are TRUE or FALSE.

This is just for fun, there are no wrong answers. The goal is to see what you have learnt from today's session. Let's get started!

- *You can get hepatitis B from having sex without condom.*

  Answer: TRUE – Reason: Hepatitis B can live in blood and sexual fluids, such as semen, sperm, vaginal fluids. So, you can get hepatitis B form blood-to-blood contact with someone who has hepatitis B, and you are also at risk by having sex without condom

- *The only way to know I have Hepatitis B is when skin becomes yellow.*

  Answer: FALSE – Reason: Many people with hepatitis B may have no symptoms at all, so the best way to know if you have it to a regular check-up with your doctor and get tested

- *You can protect yourself from getting hepatitis B by taking vitamins and eating healthy food.*

  Answer: FALSE – Reason: Getting vaccinated for hepatitis B is one of the best ways to protect yourself.

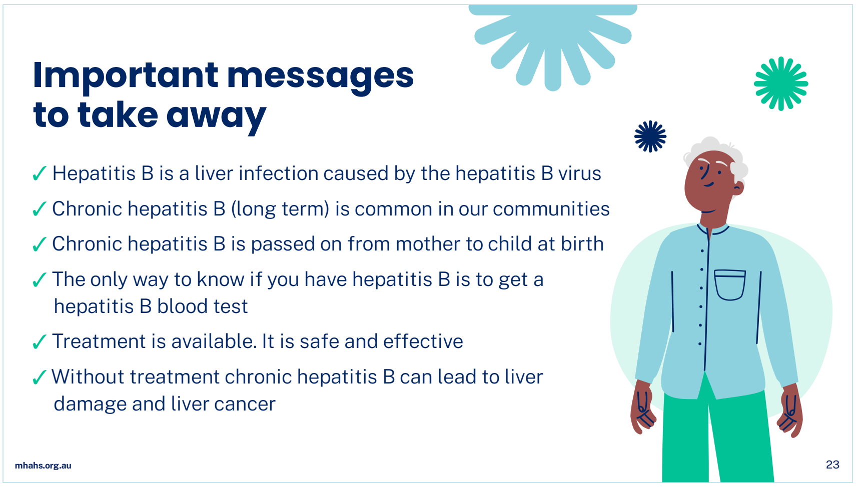
- *You have had a tattoo overseas and are not sure that equipment used was clean, you should you get tested.*

  Answer: TRUE – Reason: Because hepatitis B can be found in unsterilized or not clean equipment for tattooing, piercing, and injecting drugs.

That was great! Thank you for participating in the quiz. Does anyone have any other questions about hepatitis B? Please, feel free to ask me before we finish this session today.

Let's move on to our final slide.

Slide 23



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

mhahs.org.au

23

Facilitator notes:

We've covered a lot of information today about hepatitis B, but before we finish, here are important messages I really want you to take away:

- *Hepatitis B is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus*
- *Chronic hepatitis B (long term) in 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*

Slide 24

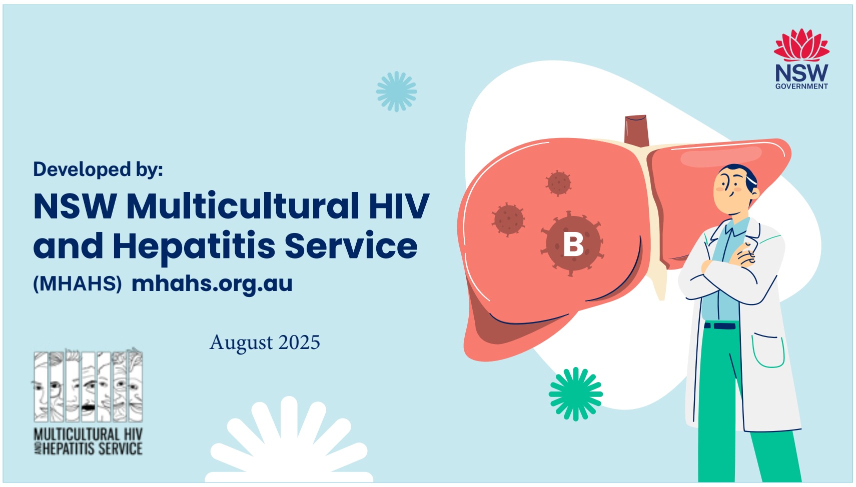
Questions?

Facilitator notes:

Are there any final questions?

Thank you everyone. We hope that you can take some of the information you learnt today and pass it on to your communities.

Slide 25



Developed by:

NSW Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service

(MHAHS) **mhahs.org.au**

August 2025

The MHAHS supports people from diverse cultural and language backgrounds across New South Wales to address HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and sexual health. It works with communities to provide information, education, and support to improve access to health care for all.

The MHAHS also partners with health services and community organisations to provide culturally tailored health education and multilingual programs to empower communities with knowledge and tools they need to navigate the health care system confidently.

Email: info@mhahs.org.au

Website – multilingual information on HIV, hepatitis B and C, STIs and liver health

Sample Evaluation Form

Topic ....

Date .... Language ....

Age .... Gender ....

1. Did the speaker explain things in a way you could understand?

☐ Yes, always ☐ Yes, sometimes ☐ No

2. Did you feel you were treated with respect and dignity (e.g. with courtesy, care and kindness) while you were in the session?

☐ Yes, always ☐ Yes, sometimes ☐ No

3. Would you recommend this session to a friend or family?

☐ Yes ☐ No

4. What is one thing you have learnt from this session?

....

....

....

....

5. Do you have any comments or suggestions?

....

....

....

....

Glossary

Abdomen: the part of the body that holds the stomach, liver, bowels, and reproductive organs.

Acute: a sickness or symptom that happens quickly or lasts a short time. Flu and urine infections are examples of an acute illness. Some people with a very serious acute illness can die.

Antibody: something that your immune system makes to fight things that are not normally part of the body, like viruses, germs. The body can remember some antibodies and that helps keep us protected from infection.

Blood-borne: It refers to diseases or infections that can pass from one person to another through blood, like hepatitis B and C. These infections can spread also through things like sharing needles, blood transfusions, cuts and wounds coming into contact with infected blood.

Blood-to-blood contact: it happens when the blood from one person mixes with the blood of another person. It can spread blood-borne diseases like hepatitis B and C, HIV.

Blood transfusion: is a medical procedure where blood is given to a person through a small tube in the arm.

Bulk billing: if your doctor bulk bills, your visit is free because Medicare pays the doctor. If your doctor does not bulk bill, you pay the doctor and then you claim some money back from Medicare.

Chronic: a disease or symptom that lasts for a long time, usually months or years, and often doesn't go away completely.

Cirrhosis: scarring of the liver because of injury or long-term disease. Scar tissue cannot perform the functions of liver tissue, so your liver function is not as good as it needs to be.

Condoms: a thin rubber (latex) bag which fits on a man's erect penis to stop pregnancy, and reduce the chance of passing on sexually transmissible infections (STIs) or viruses.

Digestion: is the process where your body breaks down food into smaller parts so it can absorb nutrients and energy.

Discrimination: Treating someone unfairly because they are different (immigrants, women, persons living with HIV/ AIDS or persons with a disability). In Australia many types of discrimination are against the law.

Disease: Illness, sickness

Diagnosis: the conclusion a doctor may reach after examining, doing tests and talking with their patients.

Glossary

Fibrosis: is when tissues in the body becomes thick and scarred.

Hepatitis: An inflammation of the liver due to viruses or drug or alcohol use.

Inflammation: when there is inflammation in your body, you might see a change in the skin colour or a swelling. It happens when your body tries to heal or fight off bacteria and viruses.

Jaundice: is when the whites of your eyes and the skin look yellow. It happens when your liver cannot work as well as normal.

HIV: it means Human Immunodeficiency Virus which can cause AIDS if left untreated.

Immune system: The body's system for fighting infections and disease. HIV destroys part of the immune system so that a person with HIV is less able to fight off infections.

Infection: a sickness you get from germs. Infections can be caused by viruses, bacteria, fungi and parasites.

Liver: The largest organ inside your body. It sits at the top right side of the stomach. It helps to digest food, store energy, and take away poisons of drugs and alcohol from your body.

Liver cancer: is a disease where not normal cells grow out of control in the liver, causing a harmful tumour.

Loss of appetite: not feeling hungry or having little to no desire to eat.

Lube or lubricant: A slippery liquid. When talking about safe sex a lubricant is a slippery water-based liquid (jelly) that should be used with a condom to stop the condom ripping or tearing.

Medication: is a drug or medicine used to treat diseases and other health conditions.

Nausea: when you have an upset stomach or feel like throwing up.

Prescription: an instruction written by a doctor, or nurse that authorizes a patient to get medicine, drugs or other treatment.

Semen or sperm: The liquid which comes out of the penis during sex when a man is very sexually excited.

Sexually Transmissible Infections or STIs: they are infections that can be transmitted from one person to another during sex.

Side effect: a possible negative reaction to medication or treatment.

Steroid: a kind of drug or medicine that stops swelling and pain. It helps your body's natural defence against sickness (your immune system).

Symptom: a sign of disease or sickness. It's something that is different in your body that might mean you have sickness. Symptoms help doctors and nurses work out what the sickness is.

Glossary

Test: A way of finding an illness by taking blood or body fluids from a person and carefully looking at them.

Toxin: harmful substances, poison.

Transmission: the passing of a disease from one person to another.

Treatment: something that a person does so that they can stay healthy or get better. It can involve taking medicine, or other therapy to treat or cure a disease, and/or change in lifestyle.

Unprotected sex: Having sex without using condoms or dams.

Unsterilized: something that is not clean or free of germs, bacteria, or viruses

Urine: is a liquid that comes out of your body when you go to the toilet.
Similar words: wee, pee, piss.

Vaccine: a shot that protects you from certain diseases like hepatitis B or Mpox. Also called immunization. Vaccines make our immunity stronger.

Vaginal fluid: The natural lubricant inside the vagina.

Virus: it is a type of germ (microbe, micro-organism) that can cause infection and make you sick which antibiotics cannot fight. HIV and hepatitis A, B and C are viruses.

Links to further information and resources

These are links to websites you can use to find more information on hepatitis B:

Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS) works with CALD communities in NSW to improve health and wellbeing in relation to HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and sexual health. MHAHS works with 20 language groups to implement a range of health promotion, community development and media initiatives.

www.mhahs.org.au

ASHM provides support to the HIV, viral hepatitis and sexual health workforce. The website includes up to date information on HIV, hepatitis and sexual health.

www.ashm.org.au

Hepatitis Australia is a peak community organisation that focusses on issues of importance to people affected by hepatitis B and hepatitis C. The Hepatitis Australia website provides a variety of information about viral hepatitis in plain English and other languages.

www.hepatitisaustralia.com

Multicultural Health Communication Service is a NSW statewide health service that coordinates multilingual health information.

www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

Hepatitis NSW is a community organisation that works to improve the health and wellbeing, or communities affected by hepatitis B and hepatitis C

www.hep.org.au

Translating and Interpreters Service is a national interpreting services for people with limited English proficiency and for agencies and businesses that need to communicate with their non-English speaking clients.

www.tisnational.gov.au

Hepatitis Queensland is a community organisation that strives to improve the lives of Queenslanders affected by viral hepatitis and liver disease via education, collaboration, and person-centred care initiatives

www.hepqld.asn.au

Healthdirect Australia is a national virtual health information service.

www.healthdirect.gov.au

The International Student Health Hub was developed to improve access to sexual and reproductive health information and services for international students in NSW. It covers topics including, sexual and reproductive health, overseas student health cover, the Australian Health Care System, relationships, contraception and pregnancy, and more!

www.internationalstudents.health.nsw.gov.au

Department of Health Victoria – Better Health Channel provides health and medical information to improve the wellbeing of people and the communities they live in.

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

These are some of the common questions that people from CALD backgrounds may have about hepatitis B which may have not been covered in the content of this education session.

Is hepatitis B common?

Yes. Around 254 million people worldwide are living with chronic hepatitis B. In Australia, most people with hepatitis B were born in countries where the virus is common.

Is hepatitis B related to HIV/AIDS? They are related in the sense that both are viral infections, transmitted through bodily fluids, such as blood, and spread in similar ways such as through sexual contact. They are both treatable with medication and currently there is no cure.

Can hepatitis B be transmitted through breastfeeding?

Yes, it can. But the risk is considered very low. While hepatitis B virus can be present in breast milk, the baby can't get it unless there are open sores or cracked nipples that come into contact with the baby's mouth.

Can hepatitis B virus be transmitted through saliva? Can I get it through kissing?

Hepatitis B virus unlikely spreads through saliva, unless there's infected blood in the person's saliva and the other person has an open wound in the mouth.

What should I do if I think I've been exposed to hepatitis B?

If you think you've been exposed to hepatitis B virus, see your GP or a doctor at a sexual health clinic.

What are the main differences between hepatitis B and hepatitis C?

Hepatitis B is most often passed on from mother to baby during childbirth. The virus lives in blood and sexual fluids. There is no cure for hepatitis B but there is a vaccine. You can live a healthy life with hepatitis B, with 6-monthly visits to your doctor.

Hepatitis C is only passed on through blood-to-blood contact, when blood from someone with hepatitis C virus gets into someone else's bloodstream. It's easily cured and there is no vaccine for hepatitis C.

Can I be vaccinated for hepatitis B in Australia?

Yes, you can. The vaccine is recommended for pregnant women, all newborns and infants, people who live with or have close contact with someone who has hepatitis B, healthcare workers, people who inject drugs, men who have sex with men, people who were born in and are travelling overseas to countries where Hepatitis B is common.

Is the hepatitis B vaccine safe?

Yes, it is. The hepatitis B vaccine is safe and effective in protecting against hepatitis B infection, providing protection in 95 of every 100 vaccinated people. It's the best protection against hepatitis B.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Should I tell the immigration that I have hepatitis B during my visa application process?

It is important to answer honestly during a visa application process. Do not give any false information to the immigration department. It is recommended that a person living with hepatitis B should tell their condition to their lawyer or migration agent so that they can provide accurate advice.

Can I bring my hepatitis B medication to Australia?

Yes, you can. But it is important to make sure you have a valid prescription from your doctor for your medication. It should be in English and include details such as your name, the name of the medication (e.g. Entecavir or Tenofovir) dosage instructions, and your doctor's contact information.

Can I buy hepatitis B medication in Australia with a prescription from overseas?

No, you can't. If your hepatitis B medication finishes or need medication during your stay in Australia, you'll need to see a GP/doctor to get a valid Australian prescription.

If I have hepatitis B, do I need to take medicine?

Not everyone with hepatitis B needs medication. Your doctor will decide based on the condition of your liver.

Can I live a normal life with hepatitis B?

Yes, you can. With regular medical check-ups, a healthy lifestyle, and medication (if needed), people with hepatitis B can live a long and healthy life.

Can I have children if I have hepatitis B?

Yes, you can. Pregnant women with hepatitis B should tell their doctor, have a regular check-up, and make sure their baby get vaccinated at birth.