

Infectious Diseases Information

Workers in HIV, HBV, and HCV laboratories receive special training in addition to what is presented in this training program. Special work practices must be followed and specific containment equipment used. Please consult with your supervisor about your labs [Agent Specific Data Safety Plan](#) for more detailed information.

Hepatitis B

What is it?

Hepatitis B is enveloped virus that is approximately 50nm in diameter and contains a positive RNA genome.

Exposure Routes

Blood, human body fluids, or OPIM

Incubation Period

Range: 14 days-9 months

Average: 60-90 days

Blood, from exposed individuals, may be infectious **before** symptoms appear.

Signs and Symptoms

Flu-like illness, jaundice, dark urine, anorexia, nausea, joint pain, rash, and fever. Chronic effects: cirrhosis and cancer. Severity is variable, and some carriers are asymptomatic.

Vaccination

You **MUST** enroll in the [Occupational Medicine](#). Once enrolled, they will review the work you will be doing and determine if you need the vaccination. If your work qualifies, you will receive it at no cost to you.

If you choose not to receive the vaccination, you must sign a formal statement of declination to be kept on file at Occupational Medicine **OR** Hospital Employee Health. A copy of the [form](#) is available from OH&S.

Hepatitis B immunization requires three injections of the vaccine into the muscle of the upper arm over a six month period. An antibody test may also be done to verify immunity.

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Hepatitis C

What is it?

Hepatitis C is an enveloped virus that is approximately 50 nm in diameter. It contains a single stranded positive RNA genome.

Exposure Routes

Human blood and blood products, human body fluids, possibly OPIM (not definite)

Incubation Period

Ranges from 2 week to 6 months. Most commonly 6-9 weeks.

Signs and Symptoms

Anorexia, vague abdominal discomfort, nausea and vomiting, loss of appetite, progression to jaundice but less frequent than with HBV. Chronic effects (often **NOT** symptomatic): cirrhosis and cancer. Severity is variable.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

What is it?

Human Immunodeficiency Virus is a retro virus that attacks the body's T-4 lymphocytes. Loss of T-4 lymphocytes cripples the immune system which can result in an infection and other opportunistic diseases.

Exposure Routes

- **Percutaneous Route:** cuts with broken glass, syringes/needle stick, injury, scalpel incision during surgery, open sores or wounds, chapped skin, acne, cold sores, burns
- **Mucous Membrane Route:** Splash of human blood on face or mouth, splash of HIV culture in eyes or mouth
- **Needlestick:** needle recapping, autoinoculation, improper sharps disposal

Incubation Period

Approximately 5 years

Signs and Symptoms

AIDS Symptoms: collapse of immune system, opportunistic infections such as pneumocystis carinii, malignant tumors such as Karposi's sarcoma, neurological damage

ARC (AIDS-Related Complex) Symptoms: enlarged lymph nodes, mycological oral infections, fatigue, weight loss