

What is hepatitis C?

- Hepatitis C is a blood borne virus that causes inflammation to the liver. There is no vaccine to prevent this infection.
- It is transmitted directly from blood to blood contact. This can occur through the sharing of needles, syringes and equipment that has been contaminated with blood.
- Three quarters of people infected with hepatitis C become chronic carriers and are able to transmit disease. The infection can remain dormant for many years without showing any symptoms.

What is HIV?

- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a blood borne virus that affects the immune system. It can be transmitted from infected blood, through direct blood to blood contact, sexual intercourse or from mother to child during childbirth.
- Once a person has been infected with HIV they will always remain infectious, even if they have no symptoms.
- HIV is the virus that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). AIDS is a severe, life-threatening disease where the immune system is unable to protect the person from infections and this can often cause more severe symptoms. There is no vaccine available.

Who can I contact?

Your General Practitioner for all follow up or Frankston Hospital Emergency Department

Phone: (03) 9784 7777

Disclaimer: The information contained in this brochure is intended to support not replace discussion with your doctor or health care professionals.

Print Code: 14077 – August 2015
Authorising Department: Infection Prevention & Control Unit

Peninsula Health
PO Box 52
Frankston Victoria 3199
Telephone (03) 9784 7777
www.peninsulahealth.org.au



Information for Community Acquired Blood & Body Substance Exposure (BaBS)



What is a BaBS exposure?

- Blood and Body Substance (BaBS) exposures occur when a person has an injury involving another person's blood or body fluids (except for sweat).
- An exposure can cause an infection to be transmitted. Some examples of this include:
 - An injury from a used needle or other sharp object contaminated with blood
 - A splash of blood directly into the eyes.
- The following terms will be used to refer to those involved:
Recipient — the person who sustained the exposure
Source — the person the blood or body fluid exposure came from. The source of community exposures on many occasions is not known.

Why do they want to test my blood?

- After an exposure has occurred, it is important that you are followed up promptly. This is because some people can have hepatitis B, hepatitis C or Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infections without showing symptoms.
- During your assessment in the Emergency Department (ED), you will be asked questions about how the injury has occurred and what type of injury occurred. This will assist staff in assessing any risk factors regarding transmission and the need for further follow up.

- This will include testing your blood. You will be asked about your immunisation status for hepatitis B. It is important at this stage to know this, as vaccination can be commenced if needed.

What are the tests?

The Recipient

It is important to test your blood to see how things stand now at this time. You will have blood collected and tested for hepatitis B immunity. The result of this test will be sent to your nominated General Practitioner (GP). The blood is stored for 12 months in the laboratory in case further testing is required.

The Source

Generally, community acquired needle stick injuries are from an unknown Source. This will not alter the necessary tests required.

What happens to my results?

- The tests may take several hours to complete. Your results are treated as strictly confidential. A copy of these results will be sent to your nominated GP. You will be required to see your nominated GP within 24 hours of initial presentation to ED to get the results.
- Any further management will need to be arranged by your GP.
- If you do not have a GP, local services are available. Please discuss this with your treating Doctor at the time of the incident.

Am I able to talk to someone else about this?

If you or your family are anxious about the effect of this exposure or have any other questions, further counselling can be arranged. If ongoing counselling is required then your GP should organise this.

What is hepatitis B?

- Hepatitis B is a blood borne virus that causes inflammation to the liver.
- It is transmitted directly from contact with infected blood through injecting equipment, sexual intercourse or from mother to child during childbirth.
- There is a vaccine available, which can prevent hepatitis B.
- Approximately 10 percent of people infected with hepatitis B will become chronic carriers. These people are capable of transmitting infection even though they have no symptoms.