



Visiting Your Doctor

When you first visit your doctor, he/she will take your medical history and give you a physical exam. They will also take some blood for tests and perhaps order an ultrasound of the liver.

To prepare for your doctor's visit,

- take a list of questions (see below) with you
- bring copies of your previous blood test results
- list of medication you are taking
- 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

Questions to Ask Your Doctor

1. What kind of hepatitis B infection do I have: a new "acute" infection, or a "chronic" infection?
2. 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.
3. 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?
4. Am I a good candidate for treatment? If not, why not? If yes, please explain why and tell me about the treatment options?
5. 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?
6. **For young women:** If I want to have children, should I wait to start treatment? If I need to start treatment now, at one point can I consider having children?
7. How will having hepatitis B affect my job or ability to work?
8. How will having hepatitis B affect my health insurance or my ability to get health insurance?
9. Here are the names of the medications that I currently take – are they safe for my liver?
10. What over the counter medications or herbal supplements can I safely take for pain, cold symptoms, etc.?

Common Tests that your doctor might order

ALT (Alanine Aminotransferase) – blood test used to evaluate the health of your liver

HBV-DNA – measures the amount of hepatitis B virus in your blood

AFP (alpha-fetoprotein) – used as a liver cancer marker

e-antigen and e-antibody – measure how active the virus is in your body. These results can change over time, as the virus becomes more and less active.

Ultrasound of the liver – allows the doctor to see if there are any abnormalities on the liver surface

Liver biopsy – The removal of a small piece of tissue from the liver using a special needle. The tissue is examined under a microscope to look for inflammation or liver damage.