

Hepatitis B Vaccine Announcement – October 2018

Minnesota Occupational Health has now received a newly approved 2-dose vaccine against Hepatitis B meaning one less clinic visit. The effectiveness of the 2-dose vs 3-dose vaccine is the same however the two vaccines are not interchangeable.

Hepatitis B vaccinations are typically offered to medical emergency response teams, law enforcement, corrections, fire, EMS, clinic, dental, nursing care and hospital workers.

The 2 doses should be administered at least 4 weeks apart. Cost for the 2-dose series is \$10 less than the 3-dose series.

- As with the 3-dose vaccine, individuals with a history of severe allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) after a previous dose of any hepatitis B vaccine or to yeast should not be vaccinated
- Until more safety data are available pregnant women needing Hep B vaccination should receive the 3-dose vaccine

Workers who have already begun the 3-dose series will complete that series. Workers beginning the hepatitis B vaccination series will receive the 2-dose vaccine.

Employers with workers who are at a higher risk of exposure sometimes offer titers (post-vaccination serologic testing). The titer (blood test) should be drawn 1–2 months after the final dose of vaccine, for both vaccine types.

The Hepatitis B vaccine is very safe, and it is effective at preventing the Hepatitis B disease. Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. Most people who get the Hepatitis B vaccine have no side effects at all. Some people report having very mild side effects, like a sore arm from the shot for a day or two. The most common side effects are usually mild and last 1 or 2 days.

The Hepatitis B virus causes a contagious liver disease that can cause cancer and cirrhosis (scarring of the liver). It is spread when infected blood, semen, or other body fluid enters the body of a person who is not infected. You can protect against Hepatitis B with safe, effective vaccination.

Minnesota Occupational Health