

Healthy Living with Chronic Hepatitis B

Chronic hepatitis B

- Hepatitis B is a liver disease caused by hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection. Some people fail to clear the virus and develop **chronic hepatitis B (CHB)**.
- People with CHB may remain asymptomatic until signs and symptoms develop secondary to serious liver damage.
- About 15 - 40% of untreated people with CHB could develop **cirrhosis** and **liver cancer**.

People with chronic hepatitis B should

- receive regular examination
- follow doctor's instruction to receive treatment and follow-up
- maintain healthy diet and lifestyle
- adopt preventive measures to stop HBV transmission

Regular examination

People with CHB should have regular examination for early detection of changes in the liver condition, no matter whether they have symptoms.

Regular examination usually includes:

- Blood test (such as liver function, alpha-fetoprotein, viral load, etc.)
- Ultrasonographic abdominal examination

Follow doctor's instruction to receive treatment and follow-up

Antiviral medication is effective in inhibiting HBV replication and reducing the risk of cirrhosis, liver failure and liver cancer

- Doctors will thoroughly assess the condition of each patient with CHB, such as liver function, viral load, degree of liver fibrosis and presence of complications, to determine when antiviral medication is needed.
- Use of antivirals cannot clear HBV completely and most patients require long-term daily use.
- Patients with CHB must take antiviral medication as prescribed. **Do not self-discontinue or self-adjust the dosage even when the viral load is suppressed or the liver function is restored to normal.** Inappropriate interruption of antiviral treatment may lead to hepatitis B reactivation, liver failure and even death.
- If you forget to take the medication on time, take it as soon as possible. However, if you recall that on the following day, leave out the missed dose. Do not take two doses together in the same day.

- Common oral antivirals for hepatitis B include entecavir and tenofovir.
 - ✓ Effective
 - ✓ Few side effects
 - ✓ Simple to take (usually taken once daily)

Entecavir

- Should be taken on an empty stomach, at least two hours before meal or at least two hours after meal
- Absorption of entecavir may be affected when taken with food, making it less effective

Tenofovir

- Can be taken with or without food
- Two formulations:
 1. **Tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (TDF)**
 - Suitable for pregnant women with high viral load to reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HBV
 2. **Tenofovir alafenamide (TAF)**
 - Suitable for patients with renal impairment or osteoporosis

Maintain healthy diet and lifestyle

- Do not smoke or drink
- Avoid eating raw or undercooked shellfish
- Do not take medication with uncertain ingredients to avoid liver damage
- Maintain balanced diet with abundant fresh vegetables and fruits
- Be physically active and maintain healthy body weight

Prevent transmission of hepatitis B

- Family members and sexual partners should get tested for hepatitis B, and consider receiving hepatitis B vaccination if found to be non-immune and not infected with HBV
- Practise safer sex if sex partner has an unknown hepatitis B immunity status or has not been fully vaccinated
- Wear gloves while handling open wounds with care and bandage them properly
- Disinfect items contaminated by blood or body fluids with household bleach and gloves on
- Do not share personal care items which may be contaminated with blood, such as razors and nail scissors

- Do not share needles or any other injecting equipment

**Please consult your doctor for further information regarding HBV
infection and treatment**



www.hepatitis.gov.hk

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