What is hepatitis B?

How do you get it?
How is it treated?
How can we prevent others from getting it?

Developed June 2016 by
Christine M. Hunt, MD, MPH, FACP, AGAF, FAASLD and Colleen Boatright MSN, RN-BC
Durham VA Medical Center
Your liver…

- is a *large organ* under your right ribs
- helps to keep your blood sugar normal
- makes *proteins to help you heal* and clot your blood
- helps you *digest* your food
- removes *harmful substances* from your blood
- AND a LOT more!
Hepatitis B is...

• a virus that infects the liver

• spread at *birth* from an infected mother to her baby

• spread by *sex* with an infected partner

• spread by *sharing needles or blood contact*

• *prevented* by *hepatitis B vaccine*
With hepatitis B ... 

- the liver can get **swollen** and **painful**
- Some people feel tired, lose their appetite, or turn yellow
- Some people do not feel sick
After hepatitis B infection...

- **Most people get better** after a few months
- Some stay sick for years and **need treatment**
- **Even if you feel better**, a **small amount of virus stays** in the liver
Antiviral pills *treat* hepatitis B virus

Antiviral pills *stop growth* of hepatitis B
A few medicines (such as *Rituximab*) let hepatitis B **grow**, making people sick

- Some feel tired, lose their appetite, or turn yellow
- Some get **very sick**
Good news – this can be prevented!

If blood tests show that you need them, safe antiviral pills can prevent hepatitis B from growing.
Your doctor may order *entecavir* or *tenofovir* antiviral pills.

Take your antiviral pills every day.
If you **stop taking** antiviral pills, **hepatitis B grows** and **may change**

If hepatitis B **changes**, it **may not respond** to the antiviral pills.

You may become **sick**.
Stop hepatitis B from *growing and changing*.

Take your antiviral pills every day.
Prevent others from getting hepatitis B…

Hepatitis B vaccine for partners and family

Safe sex

Use clean needles

Don’t share razors or toothbrushes
Thank you

• Any Questions?