

Last updated on: 3/28/2017 | Author: ProCon.org

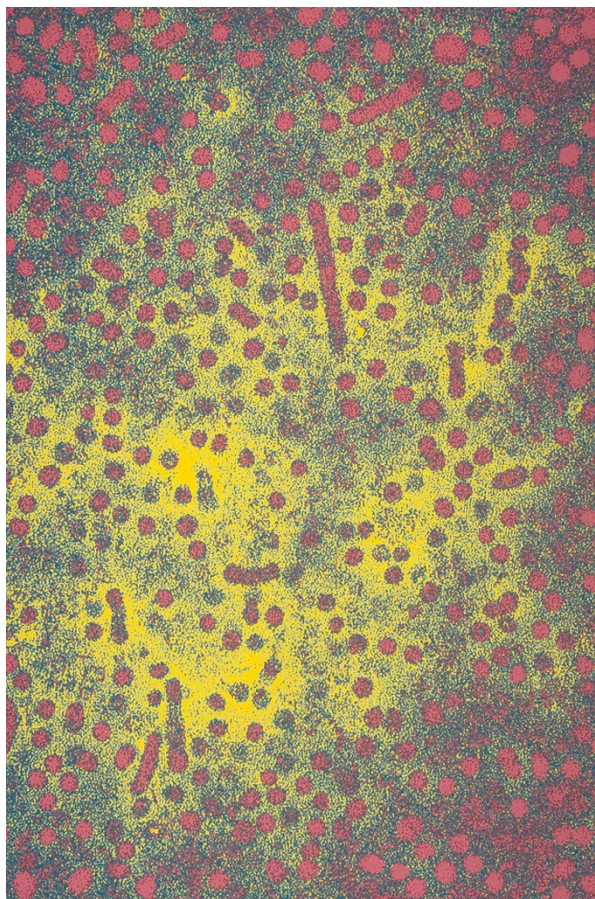
Hepatitis B

Cases, Deaths, and Vaccination Rates

Hepatitis B (hep B), according to the CDC, is “a contagious virus that is transmitted through blood, blood products, and other body fluids (such as semen)... Symptoms include a sudden fever, tiredness, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, dark urine, joint pain, and yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice).”

Hepatitis B History

In 1965, Baruch Blumberg, MD, PhD, an American doctor who won the Nobel Prize in Medicine (1976) for his work on hepatitis B, matched a protein found in an Australian aborigine’s blood with an antibody found in an American hemophiliac. First called the “Australian antigen,” it was discovered to be the hepatitis B virus and provided a source for the vaccine created in 1969. Because the virus could not be recreated in a lab, the first vaccine was a heat-treated form of the virus. In 1981, the FDA approved Heptavax-B, a vaccine created by Maurice Hilleman, PhD. Because Heptavax-B used human serum and the fear of HIV infection was high, a new recombinant DNA vaccine, Recombivax HB, was licensed on June 23, 1986 that did not use human serum. As of July 2014, two hepatitis B vaccines are used, Engerix-B and Recombivax, as well as Twinrix (a hepatitis A and hepatitis B combination vaccine).



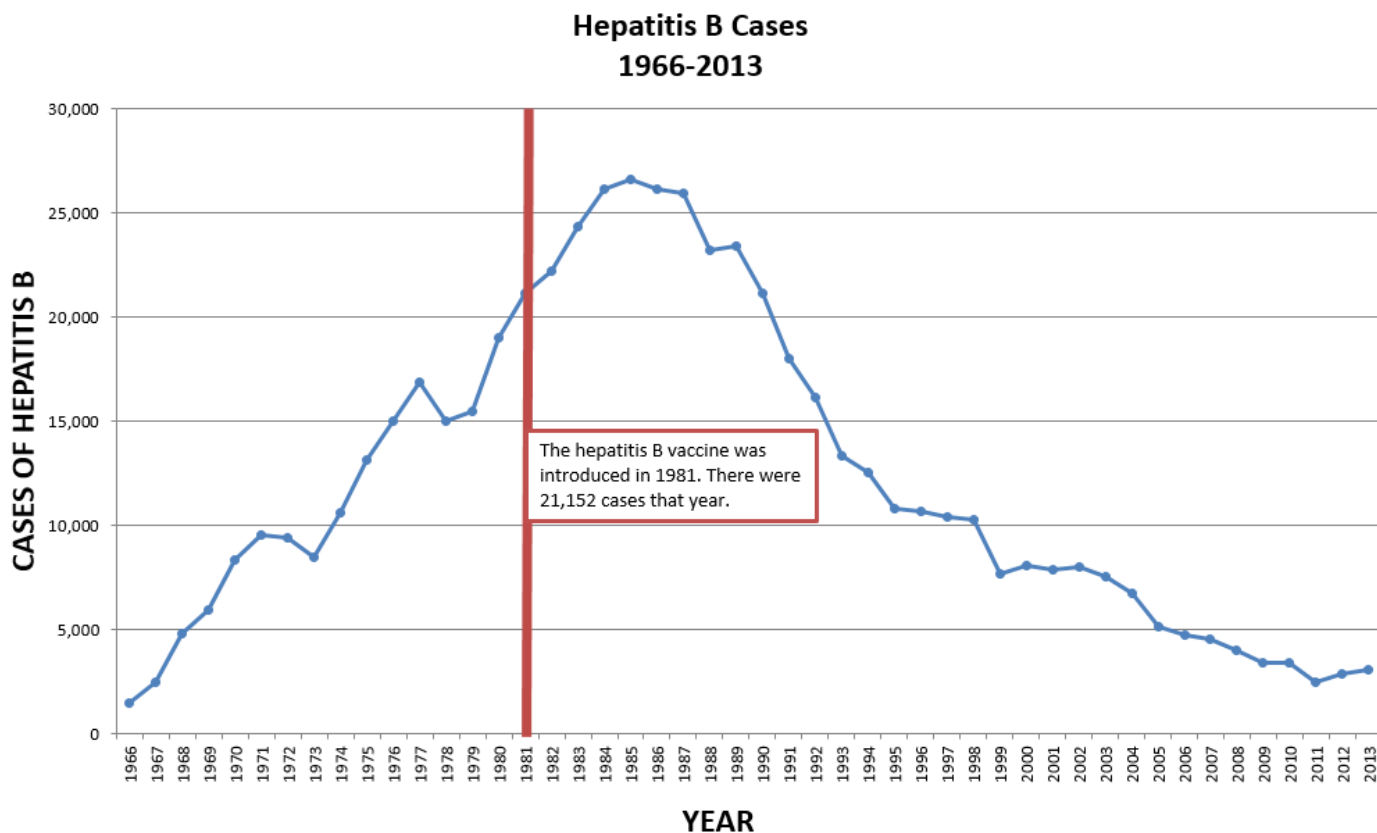
Microscopic view of the hepatitis B virus

Source: Sanofi Pasteur, “Hepatitis B Virus (HBV),”

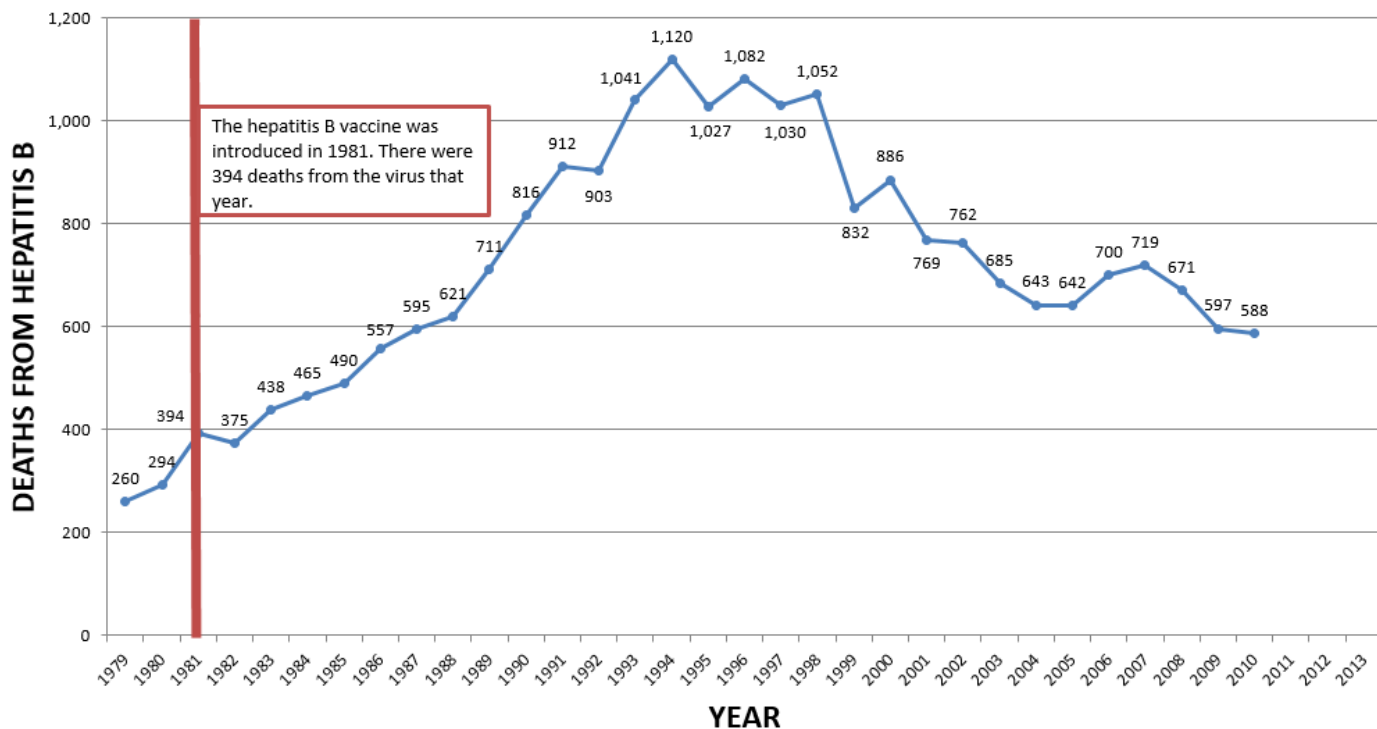
www.flickr.com, Aug. 7, 2013

Below are three graphs. The first shows the **number of hepatitis B cases** in the United States, adults and children, from 1966 to 2013. The second graph shows the **number of deaths caused by the hepatitis B virus** in adults and children from 1979 to 2013. And the third graph shows the **hepatitis B vaccination rates** among children aged 19 to 36 months in the United States since 1995.

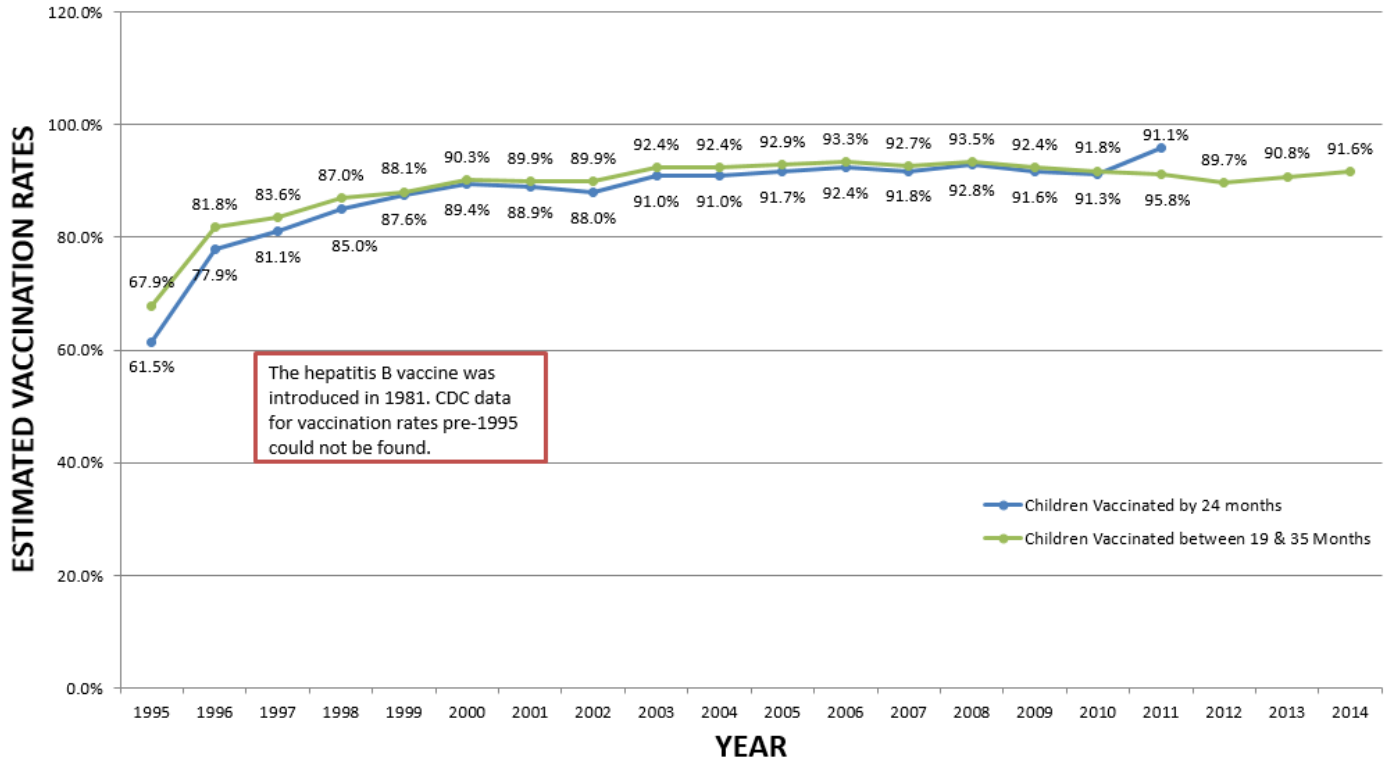
As of Aug. 18, 2014, the CDC recommends that children receive the first dose of the hepatitis B vaccination at birth.



Hepatitis B Deaths 1979-2013



Hepatitis B: Estimated Vaccination Rates for Children under 3 Years Old 1995-2014



Related Links:

- 1. [MMR vaccine](#)
- 2. [Polio vaccine](#)
- 3. [Varicella vaccine](#)
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Sources:

CDC, "Hepatitis B," cdc.gov, Mar. 10, 2013

CDC, "Reported Cases and Deaths from Vaccine Preventable Diseases, United States, 1950-2013,"  cdc.gov, Sep. 2014

CDC, "U.S. Vaccination Coverage Reported via NIS," cdc.gov, Mar. 11, 2014

College of Physicians of Philadelphia, "The History of Vaccines: Timelines, Diseases and Vaccines," historyofvaccines.org (accessed June 25, 2014)

Hepatitis B Foundation, "Hepatitis B Vaccine History," hepbf.org, Oct. 21, 2009



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