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Treatment & Management

⊖ Adults Living with Hep B

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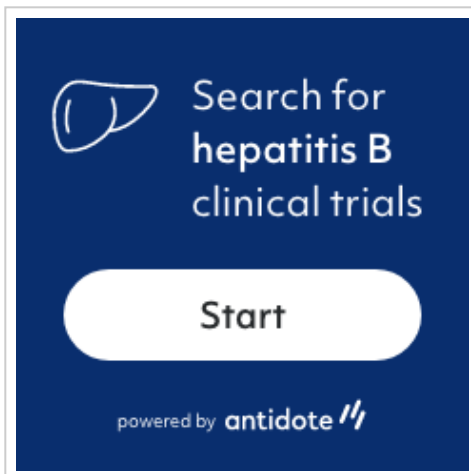
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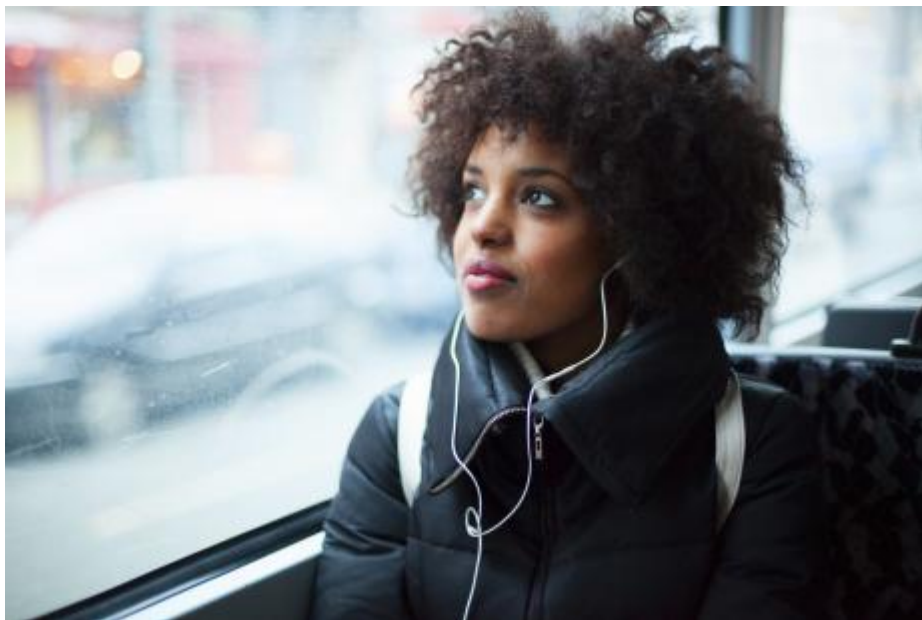
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Adults Living with Hepatitis B



If you test positive for the hepatitis B virus for longer than 6 months, this indicates that you have a **chronic** hepatitis B infection.

All patients with chronic hepatitis B infections, including children and adults, should be monitored regularly since they are at increased risk for developing cirrhosis, liver failure, or liver **cancer**.

You should make an appointment with a hepatologist (liver specialist) or gastroenterologist familiar with hepatitis B. This specialist will order blood tests and possibly a liver ultrasound to evaluate your hepatitis B status and the health of your liver. Your doctor will probably want to see you at least once or twice a year to monitor your hepatitis B and determine if you would benefit from treatment.

Not everyone who tests positive for hepatitis B will require medication. Depending on your test results, you and your doctor might decide to wait and monitor your condition. If your test results indicate that you would be a good candidate for treatment, then your doctor will discuss the current treatment options with you. Whether you start treatment or not, your doctor will want to see you every six months, or at minimum once every year.

Before you start any treatment, make sure you research each treatment option, and ask your doctor to thoroughly explain each option, so that you are well informed. It also might be a good idea to get a second opinion from another doctor before starting any treatment, because more information is always better!

Once you are diagnosed with chronic hepatitis B, the virus will most likely stay in your blood and liver for a lifetime. It is important to know that you can pass the virus along to others, even if you don't feel sick. This is why it's so important that you make sure that all close household contacts and sex partners are tested and vaccinated against hepatitis B.

While living with hepatitis B can be difficult and scary at first, the more information and support that you have, the easier it gets. Many patients become such experts at managing their hepatitis B that they sometimes teach their health care providers about the latest research and information!

The most important thing to remember is that hepatitis B is a chronic medical condition (such as diabetes and high blood pressure) that can be successfully managed if you take good care of your health and your liver. You should expect to live a long, full life.

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