

HEPATITIS B INFORMATION & VACCINATION WAIVER

Hepatitis B is a serious infectious disease caused by a virus that attacks the liver. The hepatitis B virus (HBV) can cause life-long infection that may lead to cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver, liver cancer, liver failure, or death. *There is no cure for hepatitis B*, but the infection can be prevented by vaccination.

Symptoms of the Disease

Symptoms of hepatitis B can resemble the flu and may include fever, loss of appetite, low energy, joint pain, cramping, or nausea and vomiting, as well as jaundice (yellow skin or eyes). However, in about 50 percent of cases, hepatitis B causes no symptoms and some of these become chronic carriers who are able to transmit the disease to others.

Transmission of the Disease

Hepatitis B is contagious and spreads when the blood or other body fluids of a person with the virus are absorbed into an individual's blood stream. The hepatitis B virus can live in all body fluids of an infected person, including blood, saliva, semen, and vaginal fluids. It can enter the body through cuts, tears, or abrasions in the skin and through mucous membranes of the mouth, vagina, anus, and eyes. Hepatitis B can be transmitted through sexual contact; by sharing razors, toothbrushes, shared needles for drug injection, or by getting a tattoo or body piercing using non-sterile instruments or needles.

Risk Factors for Hepatitis B

Anyone who comes in contact with the blood or body fluids of an infected person is at risk for hepatitis B. Certain behaviors can increase the risk, including unprotected sex (vaginal, anal, and oral); contact sports (sports during which players may be exposed to each other's blood or saliva); getting a tattoo or body piercing; sharing items such as razors, earrings, and toothbrushes; sharing injection drug paraphernalia; travel abroad to areas where the disease is widespread; health care and other occupations that involve exposure to infected blood or body fluids; and household contact with someone with chronic infection.

Vaccination Recommendations for College Students

A vaccine is available to help protect against hepatitis B. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends vaccination of everyone age 18 and under, and anyone at high risk for hepatitis B. The American College Health Association (ACHA) recommends that all college students be vaccinated and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) recommends that all student athletes be vaccinated. The hepatitis B vaccine is safe and effective. *You cannot get the disease from the vaccine.* The most common side effect of the vaccine is soreness at the site of the injection. Vaccination requires a series of three shots over a six-month period. After that, a booster shot is usually not necessary. The vaccine is effective in protecting over 96 percent of those who complete the three-dose vaccination series.

Other Forms of Prevention

In addition to vaccination, people can modify their behavior by using condoms during sex and avoiding tattooing and body piercing with non-sterile instruments or techniques. One also can avoid sharing needles, razors, or toothbrushes.

For more information about Hepatitis B and other infectious diseases:

To learn more about hepatitis B and other infectious diseases, as well as available vaccines, please contact your physician or visit the CDC web site at www.cdc.gov and/or the FIU University Health Services web site at: studenthealth.fiu.edu.

WAIVER OF LIABILITY:

I have read the information above pertaining to hepatitis B. I understand the risks involved and I decline to receive the hepatitis B vaccine.

Last Name	First Name	D.O.B.	Panther I.D.
Signature of student (or parent/legal guardian, if under 18 years of age)			Date