

Hepatitis D

Fact Sheet

What is Hepatitis D?

Hepatitis D is a virus that infects the liver. This virus requires co-infection with the hepatitis B virus (HBV). It may occur as an acute co-infection, or as a super infection in persons with chronic HBV.

What are the symptoms?

Onset is usually sudden, with signs and symptoms similar to HBV. Illness may be severe. Fatigue, loss of appetite, abdominal discomfort, nausea and vomiting are common symptoms. Sometimes the skin and whites of the eyes can become jaundiced (yellow).

How is it spread?

Spread is mainly through exposure to infected blood and body fluids, contaminated needles, syringes, and sexual transmission. People are most infectious just before the onset of acute illness. Blood is potentially infectious during all phases of active infection.

What is the incubation period?

The incubation period is from 2-8 weeks.

Preventive measures

Hepatitis B vaccine prevents infection with hepatitis D. Avoid exposure to body fluids and wear a condom when having sex.

Other Questions?

Talk to your health care provider or call our Communicable Disease Program at 613-966-5500 x349. Toll Free 1-800-267-2803 | TTY Dial 711 (1-800-267-6511) | www.hpepublichealth.ca

Reference

- Heymann, D.L., (2008). *Control of Communicable Disease Manual*. (19th Ed.). Washington, DC: American Public Health Association.

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