



Hepatitis A & B Vaccine (Twinrix[®])



What is hepatitis A?

- Hepatitis A is an infection of the liver caused by the hepatitis A virus.
- It is spread by eating or drinking food or water contaminated with human feces.
- Symptoms can include lack of appetite, nausea, tiredness, fever and jaundice.
- About 25% of people with hepatitis A require hospitalization.
- Less than 1 out of 1000 people with hepatitis A die.

What is hepatitis B?

- Hepatitis B is an infection of the liver caused by hepatitis B virus.
- It is spread by blood, saliva, semen and vaginal fluids.
- About 1%-2% of people with acute hepatitis B will die.
- Some infected people become chronic carriers (less than 10% of adults; 25%-50% of young children, 90%-95% of infants).
- About 15%-25% of chronic carriers will die from liver cancer or cirrhosis.
- Chronic infection may lead to liver cancer and/or death.

What does Hepatitis A & B vaccine contain?

- Neomycin, formaldehyde, aluminum salts, polysorbate 20, thimerosal, 2-phenoxyethanol and yeast.
- The connection between the needle and the syringe (in the pre-filled syringe) contains latex.

Who should receive the vaccine?

- All international travellers should be protected against hepatitis B.
- All travellers (over the age of 1 year) to developing countries should be protected against hepatitis A.
- People with bleeding disorders.
- People who have HIV.
- People with chronic liver disease.
- Personnel and residents of institutions for mentally challenged individuals
- People with a lifestyle or occupational risk.
- Transplant recipients/candidates.
- People who have hepatitis C.
- Children <7 years whose families have immigrated to Canada from countries where hepatitis B is common.
- Hemodialysis patients and pre-dialysis (chronic, renal failure)
- Men who have sex with men.

Who should not receive the vaccine?

- Infants under one year of age.
- People with moderate to severe illness may have to delay immunization.
- Use with caution in breastfeeding mothers.
- Anyone who has had a life-threatening allergic reaction to any component of the vaccine.

When should the vaccine be given?

- A series of three doses, with the second dose given at least 1 month after the first and the third dose given at least 6 months after the first.
- Hepatitis A + B vaccine may be safely given with other vaccines.

How is the vaccine given?

- By injection into a muscle.

How effective is the vaccine?

- About 88% of people (18-50 years) develop antibodies 2 weeks after 2nd dose.
- About 96% of people (18-50 years) develop antibodies 1 month after 2nd dose.
- Nearly 100% of people develop antibodies within one month after receiving the 3rd immunization.

How long does the protection last?

- At least 20 years for hepatitis A and at least 15 years for hepatitis B.
- Recent studies suggest recipients will enjoy life time protection once the series is complete.

What might be felt after receiving the vaccine?

Very Common (> 1/10)

- headache, fatigue, pain and redness at injection site

Common (> 1/100 and < 1/10)

- diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, swelling at injection site

Uncommon (> 1/1,000 and < 1/100)

- upper respiratory tract infection, fever, dizziness, muscle aches

Rare (> 1/10,000 and < 1/1,000)

- lymph disorders, rash, itchy, joint pain, nerve disorders

Very Rare (<1/10,000)

- hives

Call the number below if you have severe or unusual reactions.

Your immunization information will be recorded in a computerized system known as the Saskatchewan Immunization

Management Systems (SIMS). Information collected in SIMS may be used to:

- *manage immunization records*
- *notify you if you or your child needs an immunization*
- *and monitor how well vaccines work in preventing vaccine preventable diseases.*

Your immunization records may also be shared with health care professionals in order to provide public health services; assist with diagnosis and treatment; and to control the spread of vaccine preventable diseases.

For more information call Public Health Services at (306) 655-4780