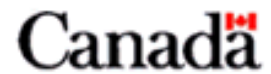




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Hepatitis D Fact Sheet

Cause	Hepatitis D is caused by the hepatitis delta virus. Discovered in 1977 This is a defective virus. It can only replicate in the presence of hepatitis B surface antigen (HbsAg). People infected with Hep D can be coinfecting (infected with Hep B and D at the same time), or superinfected (existing Hep B infection and then infected later with Hep D)
Clinical Characteristics	<p>Incubation Period..... Incubation period of coinfecting people is longer than that of superinfected people</p> <p>Infection Rates..... Worldwide, >5% of people with Hep B are also infected with Hep D</p> <p>Coinfection: Acute Illness..... Serious illness in most cases Chronic Illness..... 2% of infections become long-term</p> <p>Superinfection: Chronic Illness..... Over 90% of people infected become long-term carriers</p> <p>Death from Cancer of the Liver Few die from this complication</p> <p>Death rates are higher for patients with HBV and patients with Disease from liver damage (15-25%)</p>
Signs and Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The symptoms of Hep D are identical to those of Hep B (click here for Hep B Fact Sheet). » These symptoms include jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes), tiredness, loss of appetite, joint pain, pain in the stomach area, and feelings of sickness.
Modes of Transmission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Most cases are acquired by exposure to contaminated needles. » Sexual transmission occurs, but is not common » Household transmission can occur.
Persons at Risk	Those at risk for Hep D infection are limited to people at risk for Hep B. This includes people with multiple sexual partners and people who inject drugs. (See Hep B Fact Sheet)
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » In people without Hep B infection, vaccination against HBV will protect against the hepatitis delta virus. » People with Hep B should try to eliminate their risk of exposure to infected blood or blood products (see risk factors) to make sure they do not become infected.
Vaccine Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » There are no vaccines available for Hep D. » Vaccination against Hep B will protect against Hep D.
Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Hep D can be treated in some cases by Interferon-alpha, but around 60-97% of those who initially respond to the treatment will relapse, and get Hep D again.
Canadian Data on the Trends of Hep D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The prevalence of Hep D infection is extremely low in Canada.