



Information sheet for asylum seekers: **Hepatitis B**

A number of tests were carried as part of your medical examination, including a test for hepatitis B. This test has shown abnormal blood results which might indicate the presence of a hepatitis B infection. These findings will be passed on to the relevant health authority and the test results advised to the housing authority and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in accordance with statutory requirements (Section 62 of the Asylum Act).

In order to confirm the findings, it will be necessary to carry out additional tests, such as an ultra-sound scan of your liver and more blood tests. This is the only way to determine whether and how you are to receive treatment. Therefore, you need to see the doctor at the reception centre as soon as possible. You can also go to a GP of your choice. The certificate you need to receive treatment is available from your local district administrative office (Social Services Office) or from the Social Services Department in your town or city.

Information about hepatitis B:

Hepatitis B is a transmittable viral infection of the liver. The course of the disease differs greatly. Possible symptoms are abnormal pain in the upper abdomen, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, tiredness and jaundice (yellow eyes and yellow skin and mucous membranes). However, it is also possible for there to be no symptoms at all. In 10% of cases, hepatitis B is not fully cured and leads to chronic inflammation of the liver. As a result, the liver is increasingly destroyed. This can lead to the liver becoming scarred and shrinking (cirrhosis) and in some cases to the development of cancer in the liver (hepatocellular carcinoma).

How the virus is transmitted:

Hepatitis B viruses are transmitted from human to human, most frequently by contact with blood or through sexual intercourse and - more rarely - by contact with other body fluids.

Sexual intercourse: This is very frequently the way hepatitis B is transmitted. The risk of transmitting the disease in this way can be largely minimised by using condoms.

Contact with blood containing the hepatitis B virus: For example, by contact with bleeding wounds and the shared use of needles (in drug abuse, for example), nail scissors, razor blades, razors and toothbrushes.

Infection at birth: A mother with hepatitis B often infects her child due to contact between the bloods during birth.

Tattoos, acupuncture and ear-piercings: Hepatitis B can also be transmitted when these procedures are not carried out in a professional and hygienic manner.

Treatment options:

To what extent you need treatment for hepatitis B depends on the results of the additional tests and this will be explained to you by your doctor.

Rules for protecting other people from infection:

- There is no risk of infection with normal social contact (such as when shaking hands or conversing).
- Instruct others to wear disposable gloves in case they come into contact with your blood and other body fluids (e.g. when providing first aid and, in particular, dressing wounds).
- Tell your sexual partner that you may be infected with hepatitis B.
- Use condoms for sexual intercourse.
- Your relatives and members of your household should all be vaccinated against hepatitis B.
- Do not under any circumstances give blood if you are infected with hepatitis B.
- Pregnant women who are infected with the hepatitis B virus can have their child vaccinated against hepatitis B immediately after the birth, which will prevent the virus from being transmitted to the child.
- Tell the doctor who is treating you and tell your dentist about your hepatitis B infection.
- If the disease worsens, please contact your local health authority and tell them about your hepatitis B infection.

Your local health authority will be happy to advise you.

You can download the following background information and information sheets from the internet:

- State of Bavaria Health and Food Safety Authority [Bayerisches Landesamt für Gesundheit und Lebensmittelsicherheit or LGL] at www.lgl.bayern.de and search for http://www.lgl.bayern.de/gesundheitschutz/infektionsschutz/asylbewerber_gesundheit/index.htm (only available in German).
- Robert Koch-Institut at www.rki.de and search for <http://www.rki.de/asylsuchende> (only available in German).
- Federal Centre for Health Education (Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung) at <http://www.bzga.de> and search for <http://www.infodienst.bzga.de/?id=Seite3233> <http://www.infektionsschutz.de/erregersteckbriefe/> (available in German, English, Arabic, Turkish, French and Russian).
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/hepb/default.htm> (only available in English and Spanish).
- World Health Organization (WHO) at <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/communicable-diseases/hepatitis> (only available in English).