

# Hepatitis B vaccine – what is it and who should get vaccinated?

**THE** hepatitis B vaccine was the first anti-cancer vaccine. This is because having the hepatitis B infection puts a person at higher risk of developing liver cirrhosis and liver cancer. Preventing hepatitis B with the vaccine helps prevent liver cancer.

The hepatitis B vaccine is very safe. In Australia all babies have been routinely vaccinated at birth since the year 2000. Some adults may also need to be vaccinated.

## WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED?

- Ideally every person should be vaccinated however, some people have higher risk of becoming infected with the hepatitis B virus especially people from countries where hepatitis B is more common. These include:

- ▶ People born in East and South-East Asia (except Japan), Pacific Island countries, parts of Central Asia and the Middle East, the Amazon Basin and Sub-Saharan Africa and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

- ▶ Household contacts or other close contacts of a person with hepatitis B.

- ▶ People with chronic liver disease or hepatitis C, HIV, or other immunocompromised adults.

- ▶ Sexual contacts of a person with hepatitis B (best to use condoms for protection

if not immune from past infection or vaccination).

- ▶ People who inject drugs, and sex workers.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO BEFORE VACCINATION?

- ▶ You will need to be checked to make sure you need the vaccine. Tests required include HbsAg – hepatitis B surface antigen (to check if you have the infection), HbcAb – hepatitis B core antibody (to check if you have ever had the infection), HbsAb – hepatitis B surface antibody (to check if you have already been vaccinated or are immune from a past infection).

- ▶ You only need the vaccine if all tests are negative.

## HOW MANY DOSES OF THE VACCINE WILL YOU NEED?

- ▶ Babies require 4 doses (one at birth, then at 2,4 and 6 months of age). Babies born to mothers with hepatitis B infection will get an extra injection at birth called HBIG – hepatitis B immunoglobulin.

- ▶ Children (over 1 year) and adults generally need 3 doses of vaccine with an initial dose and one month and six months later.

- ▶ Adolescents (11-15 years) and adults may get a 2-dose schedule with an initial dose and one 6 months later.

- ▶ Talk with your doctor about what is best for you if you need the hepatitis B vaccine.

## DO YOU NEED TO CHECK IF THE VACCINE HAS GIVEN YOU PROTECTION?

- ▶ It is recommended that babies (especially those born to mothers with hepatitis B) get a blood test 3 months after the last dose to ensure they have protection with antibodies to the hepatitis B virus.

- ▶ Children and adults, a recommended to check at least 4 weeks after the last dose of the vaccine.

## DO PEOPLE NEED 'BOOSTER' DOSES OF THE VACCINE?

- ▶ Booster doses are not routinely given – your GP or specialist will let you know if you need one.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DON'T RESPOND TO THE VACCINE – THAT IS YOU DON'T GET IMMUNITY FROM HEPATITIS B?

- ▶ Non-responders may require further doses of the vaccine- your GP will let you know how many more doses you may need.

- ▶ For the very small number of people who do not respond they need to take additional precautions not to get infected with the virus – especially avoiding other people's blood and checking



sexual partners immunity.

## HOW MUCH DO THE VACCINES COST?

- ▶ For people at highest risk who have a Medicare Card the Queensland Government provides Free vaccinations. You will need to speak to your GP to see what is available to you.

- ▶ Generally, hepatitis B vaccines costs around \$30.00 a dose – ask your doctor where best to get the vaccine. You may need a prescription for the vaccine to have dispensed by a pharmacy – ask the pharmacist how much it will cost.

- For more information about hepatitis B and vaccines you can either contact the

Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland and speak to one of staff on (add your details and language) or contact 0466 042 799; or visit our website [www.eccq.com.au/bbv](http://www.eccq.com.au/bbv).

**Other useful sites include:**

[https://immunisationhandbook.](https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases)

[health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases](http://health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases)

**If you live in Cairns, you can also contact:**

**Rhonda Lewis ,  
Viral Hepatitis Health  
Coordinator**

**Phone: 07-4226 4769**

**Email: [Rhonda.Lewis@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:Rhonda.Lewis@health.qld.gov.au)**



**Hepatitis, HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health Program Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ)**

# How to Look After Your Skin and Hair in Winter

**Nimisha Modi**  
Hetvi Hair & Beauty  
0412350013



**HEY GIRLS,** cold winter air can create havoc for your poor skin and hair. Here are some tips for looking after yourself during the upcoming coldest season of the year. This will not only keep you looking good now but will prevent your skin from aging prematurely. To follow these steps, it will take only few minutes.

## STEP 1.

Wrap up from head to toe. Invest in a warm pair of gloves to protect your hands and prevent the skin on them from becoming dry and flaky. Waterproof ones are recommended if you are going out as they don't soak your hands when you come across occasional rain. Don't forget to wear a hat as they help protect your hair from drying out and they keep your head nice and warm. Too much exposure to cold, harsh weather can leave hair brittle and dry making it more susceptible to damage. As well as this, wear a scarf when possible to protect the

skin on your neck and chest.

## STEP 2.

At home, keep warm but not hot. If the temperature inside is much hotter than outside, it can irritate your skin and can even cause broken capillaries from the temperature shock when you get home or when you go out. While walking around at home wear slippers or warm socks to prevent getting cold feet which can cause chilblains, which cause your toes to swell, the skin to become sore and sometimes causes permanent disfigurement.

The same applies for when you are washing. Having a hot shower or bath can cause skin irritation if the weather is cold. As well as this it strips the natural moisture out of the skin and hair, so turn the temperature down from hot to warm.

## STEP 3.

Adapt your hair care to the weather changes. There are plenty of shampoos that help your hair be strong and healthy during winter. Hair goes dry, weak and brittle during winter, but if you give it the right treatment, you'll avoid it becoming a big



issue. Look for shampoos and conditioners which aim to protect and heal your hair, making sure it's slightly more moisturizing than what you use normally. Also, it may be a good idea to try a moisturising hair treatment once or twice a fortnight to help repair the effects of winter.

## STEP 4.

Skin becomes drier in cold weather, especially if it's windy, because the moisture off the skin is evaporated more quickly by the wind, and the skin doesn't produce

as much oil. Try using a slightly heavier moisturizer than you use in the summer, although still make sure that it's suitable for your skin type. Make sure you moisturize every morning, especially if you are going outside, to prevent your skin from becoming dry and flaky. Then at night, before going to bed, wash your face to remove make up and pollutants which could irritate your skin and apply moisturizer to treat your skin while you sleep. A couple of times a week you should use a gentle

exfoliator to scrub away dry skin which can become an issue in cold weather. As well as looking after the skin on your face, don't forget to use a body butter on the skin on your body to prevent that skin from drying out. It doesn't need quite as much attention as the skin on your face as it's not often exposed, but it will still need more care than it gets in the warmer months.

## STEP 5.

Give your lips extra attention to avoid them becoming chapped and

splitting. Apply a moisturizing lip balm when you are doing the rest of your skin care, make it part of your routine. As well as this, before you go outside apply some Castor Oil/petroleum jelly to your lips as this creates a protective barrier between the cold air and your lips, locking in moisture.

## STEP 6.

Apply a good hand cream daily and whenever needed. To keep the skin soft and comfortable, massage hand moisturizer into your hands in the morning and evening, as well as every time you wash your hand. If your hands are extremely dry, apply a suitable moisturizer at night and then wear light cotton gloves which are available for wearing at night to keep the moisture on them.

## STEP 7.

Eat a balanced diet and stay hydrated. Eating a healthy diet full of nutrients and vitamins is the best way to keep your hair and skin from looking and feeling healthy.

It is simple but effective. Enjoy your time. I will see you next month. Nimisha (0412-350-013)