

Hepatitis B

- HepB is a viral disease that attacks the liver and can cause jaundice, permanent liver damage and even death. The incubation period ranges from 45 to 160 days (avg. 120 days). The virus is spread through blood and other bodily fluids, and can survive for at least one month on contaminated surfaces in some circumstances.
- HepB can be spread through circumstances such as sexual contact with infected partner, (some individuals who are infected do not show symptoms.) Also contracted through contact of cuts or scrapes with contaminated blood or bodily fluids, repeated sharing of razor or toothbrush with an infected person, and contact with a contaminated needle (IV drug use or potentially tattooing, ear or body piercing.)
- Symptoms of HepB include:
 - Loss of appetite
 - Nausea and vomiting
 - Upper right abdominal pain
 - Headache
 - Brownish colored urine
 - Light gray stools (bowel movements)
 - Jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes)
- The after effects of HepB can last for quite a while, and a person may feel very bad for weeks or months. Serious long-term consequences of HepB include the risk of chronic infection (this means that the person could become a carrier and pass it along to others), chronic liver disease and liver cancer.
- The vaccine is generally well tolerated but may generate the following symptoms after receiving the injection: soreness, swelling and redness at the injection site. The vaccine isn't recommended for individuals who are hypersensitive to yeast or another component of the vaccine. It is possible that expanded commercial use of the vaccine could reveal rare adverse reactions. Three doses administered in the usual 0, 1, and 6 month schedule resulted in immunity in 96% of healthy adults and adolescents.
- The vaccine is given in a series of 3 injections in the following recommended manner: After the 1st injection, the 2nd is due one month later, and the 3rd is due six months after the 2nd.

Meningococcal Meningitis

- Meningococcal Meningitis is a bacterial infection that can cause severe swelling of the brain and spinal cord. The disease is potentially very dangerous because it is relatively rare and is often mistaken for a minor cold or flu, and as a result, is ignored. The bad news is that up to 1 out of every 5 people who develop the disease, will die. Of those who survive, up to 1 in 5 will develop permanent disabilities such as amputation, brain damage, hearing loss and seizures. Recognizing the signs and symptoms of the disease are critical and potentially lifesaving.
- Symptoms of meningitis include:
 - Headache
 - Fever
 - Stiff neck
 - Nausea
 - Vomiting
 - Sensitivity to light.
- Data from across the country continues to show that college age students living on campus, particularly freshmen have a significantly higher risk of getting meningitis than young people living off campus. Reasons why college students are susceptible to the disease include the following: Living in a crowded dorm-room, going out to bars, drinking alcohol, smoking or being around a smoker.
- Because the infection is easily transmitted through the air via droplets of respiratory secretions, direct contact with infected persons (kissing, sharing of utensils, drinking glasses, cigarettes, etc...) puts the individual at risk. The vaccine is generally safe and well tolerated. Reactions that may occur include the following: Soreness or redness at the injection site & mild fever.
- Precaution: The vaccine isn't recommended during pregnancy, if the immune system is compromised or certain health conditions exist. No vaccine is 100% guaranteed for susceptible individuals.