



The Beacon

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Med-Cert Medical Management Resources

“Guiding your way to better health management”

What is Hepatitis B?

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Hepatitis B is a virus that infects the liver. Most adults who get hepatitis B have it for a short time and then get better.

You can have hepatitis B and not know it. You may not have symptoms. If you do, they can make you feel like you have the flu. But as long as you have the virus, you can spread it to others.

Sometimes the virus causes a long-term infection, called chronic hepatitis B. Over time, it can damage your liver.

What Causes Hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is caused by the hepatitis B virus. It is spread through contact with the blood and body fluids of an infected person.

You may get hepatitis B if you:

- Have sex with an infected person without using a condom.
- Share needles (used for injecting drugs) with an infected person.
- Get a tattoo or piercing with tools that were not cleaned well.
- Share personal items like razors or toothbrushes with an infected person.

A mother who has the virus can pass it to her baby during delivery. If you are pregnant and think you may have been exposed to hepatitis B, get tested.

You **cannot** get hepatitis B from casual contact such as hugging, kissing, sneezing, coughing, or sharing food or drinks.

What are the symptoms?

- Feeling very tired
- Mild fever
- Headache
- Not wanting to eat
- Feeling sick to your stomach or vomiting
- Belly pain
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Muscle aches and joint pain
- Skin rash
- Yellowish eyes and skin (jaundice); jaundice usually appears only after other symptoms have started to go away.

How is Hepatitis B diagnosed?

A simple blood test can tell your doctor if you have the hepatitis B virus now or if you had it in the past. Your doctor also may be able to tell if you have had the vaccine to prevent the virus.

If your doctor thinks you may have liver damage from hepatitis B, he or she may use a needle to take a tiny

sample of your liver for testing. This is called a liver biopsy.

How is it treated?

In most cases, hepatitis B goes away on its own. You can relieve your symptoms at home by resting, eating healthy foods, drinking plenty of water, and avoiding alcohol and drugs. Also, find out from your doctor what medicines and herbal products to avoid, because some can make liver damage caused by hepatitis B worse.

Most people with chronic hepatitis B can live active, full lives by taking good care of themselves and getting regular checkups. There are medicines for chronic hepatitis B, but they may not be right for everyone. Work with your doctor to decide whether medicine is the right treatment for you.

Sometimes, chronic hepatitis B can lead to severe liver damage. If this happens, you may need a liver transplant.

Med-Cert News

**The Med-Cert office will be closed,
Monday May 28th in observance of
Memorial Day.**

Did you know??

When we touch something, we send a message to our brain at 124 mph...



Ask A Nurse

Q: My baby keeps getting diaper rash. What can I do?

A: Change your baby's diaper frequently. If possible leave your baby's bottom bare for a few minutes before putting on a new diaper. You may want to consider applying an over-the-counter diaper rash cream. If the rash persists, see your doctor.

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Q: Is it possible to be addicted to sugar?

A: Not the way you can be addicted to a drug. Sugar triggers the release of opiates in the brain, which makes you feel good. Unfortunately, eating too much sugar is a recipe for weight gain. Rely on fruit, it offers naturally occurring sugar but less than what is in most added-sugar treats - plus vitamins, minerals, and they fill-you-up with fiber.

April is National Autism Awareness Month

1 percent of the population of children in the U.S. ages 3-17 have an autism spectrum disorder. Get more information for the Autism Society at 1-800-328-847620 or go to: <http://www.autism-society.org/>

DON'T FORGET TO PRECERTIFY

Med-Cert's Toll-free Precert Telephone Number is (800)-356-7126 and should be reflected on your health insurance ID cards.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the employee/participant/member to make sure precertification has been done. Many plans will reduce your benefit amount if you fail to precertify.

Group Health Plans vary from one employer to the next so it is important for you to know what your health plan requires. Call the customer service representative for your health plan if you have questions.

Below is a list of some of the common Standard Precertification Notification Requirements.

- *Inpatient Hospital Stays*
- *Inpatient Treatment for Mental and Emotional Conditions or Substance Abuse*
- *Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy*
- *Skilled Nursing Care*
- *Outpatient Stays over 12 hours*
- *Outpatient Surgeries*
- *Physical Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Speech Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Home Health Care*
- *Hospice Care*
- *Maternity – on confirmation of pregnancy (or at least 2 months prior to delivery) and again on admission for delivery*
- *Outpatient Procedures – refer to your Employee Benefit Plan booklet as some plans require precertification for outpatient procedures*

Med-Cert provides:

Utilization Management, Maternity Management, Large Case and Wellness Disease Management, Transplant Coordination and Stop Loss Assessments

For information on any of our services, please call 866-261-5657 (toll free). We are on the Internet. Visit us at: www.medcertinc.com

Recipe Corner



Enchilada Casserole

Ingredients

- 1 pound lean ground beef (90% lean)
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cups salsa
- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat Italian salad dressing
- 2 tablespoons reduced-sodium taco seasoning
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 6 flour tortillas (8 inches)
- 3/4 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded reduced-fat Mexican cheese blend
- 1 cup shredded lettuce
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 1/4 cup minced fresh cilantro

Directions

- In a large skillet, cook beef and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Stir in the salsa, beans, dressing, taco seasoning and cumin. Place three tortillas in a 2-qt. baking dish coated with cooking spray. Layer with half of the meat mixture, sour cream and cheese. Repeat layers.
- Cover and bake at 400° for 25 minutes. Uncover; bake 5-10 minutes longer or until heated through. Let stand for 5 minutes before topping with lettuce, tomato and cilantro. Yield: 8 servings.



This newsletter is brought to you courtesy of Med-Cert, Inc. Our sources for this edition are Web MD, Prevention magazine and About.com.