Hepatitis B can be spread through sexual contact

Hepatitis B is a blood-borne virus that can cause long-term liver disease and even liver cancer in some people.

Hepatitis B can be spread through blood and body fluids such as semen and vaginal fluids, so it can be caught:

- during unprotected sex, including anal and oral sex
- by sharing needles to inject drugs such as heroin

How many people did you say you’d had sex with?

How to prevent hepatitis B:

- have safe sex – always use a condom
- get vaccinated against hepatitis B if you are at high risk of infection
Symptoms of hepatitis B
Symptoms can include:
- feeling sick
- being sick
- lack of appetite
- flu-like symptoms, such as tiredness, general aches and pains, and headaches
- yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice)

Many people don’t realise they have been infected with the virus because the symptoms may not develop immediately, or even at all.

Treatment for hepatitis B
There is currently no specific treatment for acute hepatitis B, other than using painkillers to relieve symptoms.

Treatment for long-term hepatitis B depends on how badly your liver is affected. It can be treated using medications designed to slow the production of the virus and prevent damage to the liver.

The hepatitis B vaccine
The hepatitis B vaccine is usually only recommended for people in high-risk groups, such as:
- people who inject drugs or have a sexual partner who injects drugs
- people who change their sexual partner frequently
- people travelling to or from a part of the world where hepatitis B is widespread
- healthcare workers who may have come into contact with the virus

Find out more at: www.gov.uk/phe

If you think you have symptoms of hepatitis B please contact your doctor or sexual health clinic. For further information on hepatitis B please visit www.nhs.uk

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