Testing for Hepatitis B Exposure/Immunity

This information sheet is designed to help you understand all the steps of hepatitis B screening, vaccine administration, and medical follow-up. Hepatitis C may be part of the screening, if risk factors are identified.

Hepatitis B Screening

First, it must be determined if you should receive the vaccine:

- Make a nurse appointment by calling 642-2000 to request hepatitis B vaccine screening.
- If you do not have significant risk factors for past hepatitis B exposure, no screening tests will be needed prior to vaccination.
- The clinic nurse may order a hepatitis B surface antigen, a hepatitis B core antibody, and a hepatitis C antibody test (if hepatitis C risk factors are identified). There are fees for these tests.

Vaccine Appointments

- At the Specialty Clinic reception desk, make an appointment for the first hepatitis B vaccine shot no sooner than 9-10 days from the date blood is drawn.
- Your lab results will be available for you to pick up at the Info desk 9-10 days after blood is drawn.
- If your results are negative, you will not be contacted. You may begin the vaccine series. The nurse who gives the vaccine will have your test results. There is a fee for the vaccine.
- If your hepatitis B core antibody test is positive, and your hepatitis B surface antigen test is negative, you are already immune to hepatitis B and do not need vaccine. No medical follow-up is needed. Cancel your hepatitis B vaccine appointment by calling 642-2970. Vaccine is not given to patients who already have antibodies to the virus.

Medical Follow-up for Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C Carriers

If the hepatitis B surface antigen and/or the hepatitis C antibody test is positive, you carry an active virus that can be transmitted to others, and which can have adverse health consequences for you even if you have no symptoms.

- The nurse will notify you of the positive test results.
- You will need to make an appointment with a clinician to discuss your future medical needs and to receive advice on how to avoid transmission of the virus. The appointment line is 642-2000.

It is extremely important that you see a clinician if the hepatitis B surface antigen or hepatitis C antibody test is positive!

Check our website: www.uhs.berkeley.edu to learn more about this medical concern or others.