

# Health & Immunisation Management Services



Experienced, cost effective vaccination and health services

## Information Sheet- Hepatitis A&B

Hepatitis A & B are infections of the liver caused by these two forms of Hepatitis virus. The Hepatitis A virus may be spread by direct contact or by faecal contaminated foods or water (oral-faecal transmission). Hepatitis B virus, on the other hand, is spread by blood contact and body fluid contact.

A combined vaccine has been developed to protect against Hepatitis A & B. This consists of receiving three injections over six months. Clinical trials indicate that Hepatitis A protection can be conferred to individuals for up to 20 years. The National Health and Medical Research Council currently advise boosters are no longer necessary for Hepatitis B if a confirmatory blood test undertaken a month after the third dose of Hepatitis B vaccine, indicates the body has produced an immune response to the Hepatitis B vaccine

**The National Health and Medical Research Council recommend Hepatitis A & B for individuals in the following categories:**

- You are in close association with or caring for a person who has been diagnosed as having Hepatitis A or B;
- Travellers to areas where the disease is endemic;
- Individuals where occupational exposure is a risk;
- Teachers and other contacts of the intellectually disabled;
- Those caring for young children in day care centres, particularly where the children are not toilet trained;
- Recipients of blood products and persons receiving haemodialysis treatment;
- Health care workers;
- Visitors or workers in remote indigenous communities; ;
- Sewerage workers.

**Note:** It is recommended that health care workers, who may be exposed to blood, and or body fluids, have confirmatory Hepatitis B blood tests 1 month after the third dose of the Hepatitis B containing vaccine.

**Contra-indications for the Hepatitis A&B Combined vaccine (Twinrix)**

- Hypersensitivity to any component of the vaccine (e.g. neomycin sulphate);
- Illness: Acute febrile illness;
- Pregnant women (unless there is a substantial risk of exposure to Hepatitis A virus)

**Common reactions**

- Soreness at the injection site
- Redness
- Swelling
- Nausea, malaise, headache and loss of appetite are occasionally reported;
- Hypersensitivity reactions including skin reactions have occasionally been reported;

**Should you experience any unexpected side affects you can seek medical advice from**

- ▣ Your GP
- ▣ Your Immunisation Provider  
The Immunisation Section (SA Health) 0900-1630 Monday –Friday  
Telephone: 1300 232 272

**If it is after hours, please call**

- ▣ Health Direct 1800 022 222
- ▣ Or your local Emergency Department