



## Hepatitis B Treatment Information

### **The future looks bright for those who are chronically infected with the hepatitis B virus (HBV).**

Only 10 years ago, there were no options. Now, there are promising drugs that can slow down liver damage caused by the virus. This means that there will be less damage done to the liver, and less chance of developing serious liver disease later on. With all of the exciting new research, there is great hope that a complete cure is on the horizon for people living with chronic hepatitis B!



**What treatments are currently approved for HBV?** The good news is that there are several promising treatment options. Currently, there are six approved drugs for chronic HBV in the U.S.: (1) Interferon alpha (Intron A), an injection given several times a week, approved 1991; (2) Lamivudine (Epivir), a daily pill; approved in 1998; (3) Adefovir dipivoxil (Hepsera), a daily pill, approved 2002 (4) Pegylated interferon (Pegasys), an injection given once a week, approved 2005; (5) Entecavir (Baraclude), a daily pill, approved 2005; and (6) Telbivudine (Tyzeka) a daily pill, approved 2006.

You and your doctor will need to discuss the treatment options before deciding which one is best for you. For many patients, these medications will decrease or stop hepatitis B virus reproduction. This results in patients feeling better within a month or two because liver damage from the virus is slowed down, or even reversed in some cases. Although the FDA has approved these drugs for chronic hepatitis B, they do not provide a complete cure at this time. They do, however, significantly decrease the risk of progressive liver damage from the hepatitis B virus. To learn more about these approved drugs as well as the experimental drugs still being tested, visit the Hepatitis B Foundation's [HBV Drug Watch](#) at [www.hepb.org](http://www.hepb.org).



**Does every patient need to be treated?** It is important to know that not every patient with chronic HBV needs to be on medication. Patients with active signs of liver disease may benefit the most from treatment. However, all chronically infected patients should be seen by their doctor at least once a year (or more frequently) for regular medical follow-up care, whether they start treatment or not. Talk to your doctor about approved treatments or whether there are any clinical trials of new HBV drugs that you might be eligible for and could benefit from.

**What about clinical trials?** Clinical trials are carefully controlled studies that are used to determine whether new drugs, treatments, or medical products are safe and effective. People volunteer to participate in these trials as they can provide patients the opportunity to potentially benefit from the latest advances in medical science. There are many HBV treatments that are currently in clinical trial, and many new and promising treatments on the horizon. To help you learn more, the Hepatitis B Foundation maintains a list of hepatitis B clinical trials on its website at [www.hepb.org/clinicaltrials](http://www.hepb.org/clinicaltrials).

**How can I learn more about treatment for HBV?** First, talk to your doctor. If he or she is unfamiliar with the latest treatment advances, contact a liver specialist ("hepatologist"). Be sure to visit the Hepatitis B Foundation website at [www.hepb.org](http://www.hepb.org) for a national directory of liver specialists, an updated Drug Watch, and HBV clinical trial sites. Call us at 215-489-4900 or email us at [info@hepb.org](mailto:info@hepb.org) for more personalized information and referrals. You can also visit the National Institutes of Health (NIH) clinical trials site at [www.clinicaltrials.gov](http://www.clinicaltrials.gov) or Center Watch at [www.centerwatch.com](http://www.centerwatch.com).

