

PERINATAL HEPATITIS B PROGRAM

New York State has a unique program for perinatal hepatitis B virus (HBV) surveillance and control. A public health law which became effective May 10, 1990, mandates universal testing of all pregnant women and reporting and treatment of all infants born to hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) positive mothers. The treatment of infants born to HBsAg positive women with hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) and hepatitis B vaccine is 85-95 percent effective in preventing chronic hepatitis B infection; vaccine alone is 70-80 percent effective. HBIG should be administered as soon as possible after birth, ideally within 12 hours, but at least by 48 hours. If vaccine is not immediately available, the first dose can be given within the first seven days after birth. The subsequent two doses should be given one and six months after the first dose. If a woman is found to be HBsAg positive more than one month after giving birth, the infant should be tested for hepatitis B and vaccinated only if the results are negative. In order to monitor the success of vaccination, infants should be tested for hepatitis B surface antibody (anti-HBs) at 12-15 months of age. Testing at this time for anti-HBc (anti-hepatitis B core antibody) is also recommended in order to distinguish vaccine seroconversion from natural infection.

The number of infants born in New York State excluding New York City to hepatitis B carrier mothers in 1992 and 1993 who were identified as requiring hepatitis B vaccination is shown in the table below. In 1992, 347 infants were known to be born to HBsAg positive mothers. Although 100 percent of these infants received HBIG and dose one of the hepatitis B vaccine, only 83 percent completed the full series of three doses of vaccine. The data for 1993 births is preliminary since infants born late in the year are not old enough for dose three of vaccine at the time of this printing.

In 1992, eight cases of acute hepatitis B occurred in children under the age of five living in New York State excluding New York City. In 1993, seven cases occurred in this age group.

**Number of Infants Born to Hepatitis B Carrier Mothers in New York State
(excluding New York City), Receiving Immunization
1992 - 1993***

	1992	1993*
Total Infants Requiring Vaccine	347	335
Vaccine Administered		
HBIG	347	330
Dose 1	347	333
Dose 2	325	302
Dose 3	288	169

* Preliminary Data