



Viral Hepatitis Test Results and Interpretations*

Exposure Type or Risk Factors	Approximate Time from Exposure	Hepatitis B Surface Antigen (HBsAg)	Hepatitis B Surface Antibody (HBsAb)	Hepatitis B core-Total Antibody (anti-HBc)	Hepatitis B core-IgM Antibody (anti-HBc) IgM	Interpretation
Hepatitis B Vaccine	1–2 months after 3rd vaccine	Not done	Negative	Not done	Not done	Presumptive non-immunity to infection with HBV.
		Not done	Indeterminate	Not done	Not done	For indeterminate results, further assess patient's immune status by considering other clinical information.
		Not done	Positive	Not done	Not done	Hepatitis B surface antibody (HBsAb) detected at ≥ 10 mIU/mL. Indicates immunity to infection with HBV.
Hepatitis B Known Exposure OR Risk Factors	< 3 months	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative	Incubation period. Vaccinate. Hepatitis B Immune Globulin (HBIG) may be indicated.
	1–3 months	Positive	Negative	Negative	Negative	Indicates early acute stage of infection or late incubation. Diagnose with aid of clinical presentation. Patients may be infectious.
	3 months	Positive	Negative	Positive	Positive	Indicates hepatitis B early acute infection. Patients may be infectious.
	3–6 months	Negative	Positive	Positive	Positive	Indicates early recovery and immunity. Infectivity unknown.
	≥ 6 months	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Indicates chronic infection.
	6–12 months	Negative	Positive	Positive	Negative	Indicates previous HBV infection and immunity; infectivity unknown.
	> 6 months	Negative	Negative	Positive	Negative	“Core Alone” may be a false positive result; window phase of resolving acute infection; late immunity stage; or unresolved infection in late or low grade state. Patient should not give blood.
	Years	Negative	Positive	Positive	Negative	Indicates recovery. Immune to reinfection.

*Note: These results and interpretations are for serum tests for viral hepatitis, as performed by the State Lab. This chart was developed by Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Public Health Laboratories and the Hepatitis Prevention Program.



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Exposure Type or Risk Factors	Approximate Time from Exposure	Hepatitis C (anti-HCV)	Interpretation
Hepatitis C Risk Factor Or Blood Donor Or Abnormal ALT Or Acute Hepatitis	>6 months	anti-HCV Negative	Indicates immunocompetent patient without acute infection or possible immunosuppressed patient with acute infection.
	2-26 weeks	anti-HCV Negative or Indeterminate	Possible incubation stage. Retest 6 months after exposure.
	>6 months	anti-HCV Positive S/CO <8.0**	Supplemental testing recommended. (Automatic supplemental testing by the BPHL—results forwarded when available.)
	>6 months	anti-HCV Positive; S/CO ≥8.0	Indicates past or present infection. High s/co ratios usually confirm positive (≥95%) when supplemental testing is performed. Routine supplemental testing is not recommended for these samples. (Supplemental NAT for HCV RNA testing performed by the BPHL ONLY on a case by case basis at the written request of provider).
	>6 months	Anti-HCV Positive NAT for HCV RNA Positive	Indicates past or present HCV infection. The detection of HCV RNA may be desired in evaluating patients for treatment and/or monitoring antiviral therapy.
ACRONYMS Anti-HCV: Antibody to HCV NAT: Nucleic Acid Testing S/CO: Signal To Cut-Off Ratio RNA: Ribonucleic Acid ALT : Alanine Aminotransferase BPHL: Bureau of Public Health Laboratories	>6 months	Anti-HCV Positive NAT for HCV RNA Negative	Indicates past or present HCV infection. NAT for HCV RNA is not detectable during all stages of infection. Antibody to HCV detected but not confirmed by a more specific assay. Possible false positive or virus at undetectable limit. Repeat in 6 months.
	>6 months	Anti-HCV Positive NAT for HCV RNA Negative	Indicates past or present HCV infection. NAT for HCV RNA is not detectable during all stages of infection. Antibody to HCV detected but not confirmed by a more specific assay. Possible false positive or virus at undetectable limit. Repeat in 6 months.
Exposure Type or Risk Factors	Approximate Time from Exposure	Hepatitis A (anti-HAV) Antibody	Interpretation
Hepatitis A Known Exposure OR Risk Factors	2–9 weeks	IgM Positive Total Antibody Positive	Early acute hepatitis A infection. Patient potentially infectious.
	3–6 months	IgM Positive Total Antibody Positive	Acute hepatitis A infection. No need for vaccine.
	Months to Years	Total Antibody Positive	Recovery state. Patient immune to hepatitis A. No need for vaccine.
Vaccine	Months to Years	Total Antibody Positive	Antibody to hepatitis A detected. Patient immune. Post-vaccination testing usually not recommended.

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**Different assays have different ratios that correspond to a >95% chance that results will confirm positive. BPHL currently uses an assay with a predictive positive S/CO of 8.0.