Hepatitis B Surface Antigen Screening Among Pregnant Women and Care of Infants of Hepatitis B Surface Antigen–Positive Mothers—Guam, 2014

Hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection is endemic in the U.S. territory of Guam, and perinatal transmission is a major mode of transmission. The federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that all pregnant women be screened for hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) in each pregnancy and that infants of HBsAg–positive women receive postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) with hepatitis B vaccine and hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) within 12 hours of birth to reduce the risk for perinatal HBV transmission.

In a hospital–based random sample of women with a live birth during 2014 in Guam, HBsAg seroprevalence (2.0%) was approximately 13 times higher than that among U.S.–born Pacific Islander and Asian women (0.14%) and approximately twice the overall U.S. maternal prevalence estimate (0.9%). Approximately 90% of HBsAg–positive women were born before introduction of universal infant hepatitis B vaccination. Among women who had at least one prenatal care visit, 98% received prenatal HBsAg screening, compared with 85% of women who did not receive prenatal care. All infants of HBsAg–positive women received hepatitis B vaccine and all but one infant received HBIG.

Prenatal HBsAg screening facilitates prompt identification of HBsAg–positive pregnant women and mitigates the risk for perinatal HBV transmission. Timely administration of PEP to infants of HBsAg–positive women is important to prevent perinatal HBV transmission.


For the complete report: http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6619a5
A National Strategy for the Elimination of Hepatitis B and C: Phase Two Report

With support from the CDC and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases, the Infectious Diseases Society of America, and the National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine convened an expert committee to describe a strategy for eliminating viral hepatitis as a U.S. public health problem by 2030.

The committee produced two reports. The first report concluded that both hepatitis B and C could be eliminated as public health problems in the United States, but that there are substantial obstacles to meeting this goal. This second report, A National Strategy for the Elimination of Hepatitis B and C: Phase Two Report, recommends specific actions to hasten the end of these diseases and lays out five areas—information, interventions, service delivery, financing, and research—to consider in the national plan.

The committee provides a path toward mitigating these problems, avoiding about 90,000 deaths by 2030.

Source: The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine

To download and read a free copy of this report, visit: www.nationalacademies.org/HepatitisElimination.

CDC Call to Action: Let's Work Together to Stem the Tide of Rising Syphilis in the U.S.

Syphilis rates are increasing among women and their babies, and men throughout the U.S.; untreated syphilis can cause severe medical issues.

Efforts are needed to create new tools to detect and treat syphilis, increase testing, control the further spread of syphilis, and improve electronic medical records in order to improve patient outcomes.

The CDC Call to Action document provides an overview of syphilis in the U.S., actions for specific populations, and steps the CDC plans to take.

To view the report, go to: https://www.cdc.gov/std/syphilis/syphiliscalltoactionapril2017.pdf
STD Prevention and Elimination Efforts in Florida: Using Mobile Dating Apps for Partner Notification

Next month, 30 STD/HIV Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) across the state will incorporate a new method into partner service using mobile dating applications (apps) as a means of partner notification. Specifically, DIS will use Internet email addresses and mobile dating apps to confidentially contact known and suspected sex and needle-sharing partners of reportable STDs, including HIV. These DIS will have access to six apps on their Department-issued phones, including: Grindr, Adam4Adam, Tinder, Jackd, Scruff, and Plenty of Fish.

According to Frank Strona, the Senior Public Health Advisor Content Specialist at the San Francisco Department of Public Health, using mobile dating apps is not a replacement for traditional partner services. Rather, it is part of the same process and an additional opportunity to reach a patient. The goal remains the same—provide successful confidential contact, treatment, and follow-up with partners.

Staff in the STD and Viral Hepatitis Section at the Florida Department of Health (Department) carefully considered today’s changing technological landscape (that is the ever-increasing reliance on digital interactions) prior to the development of this initiative. The use of mobile dating apps by 18 to 24-year-olds alone has increased from 5% in 2013 to 22% in 2015 in the U.S. (pewresearch.org). By introducing this initiative in Florida CHDs, DIS will be able to more readily reach target audiences, or even individuals who may only have a virtual identifier.

Nevertheless, the Department maintains that in-person or phone contact needs to continue to be the primary means of partner notification, and that DIS should only notify partners via mobile dating apps if all other approaches are exhausted. The Department will thoroughly monitor this initiative to ensure all DIS with access to mobile dating apps adhere to related policy and procedures.
Resources

Learn more about viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted diseases by subscribing to these websites/forums.

National Academies Press–Health and Medicine Topic
nap.edu

Hep Magazine
hepmag.com

National Prevention Information Network (NPIN)
npin.cdc.gov

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The Healthcare Tree visualizes the key public health challenges and influences in the effectiveness of public health and preventative elements of the Sustainability and Transformation Plans in the United Kingdom.

Photograph Credit: UK's Faculty of Public Health

To learn more on how to replicate the success of DOH–Citrus in treating patients with hepatitis C, contact Sandy Child at Sandra.Child@flhealth.gov. Or, to learn more about how county health departments will use mobile dating apps for partner notification, contact Dan George at Dan.George@flhealth.gov.

Thank you to Nita Harrelle for writing 'DOH–Citrus Success in Treating Hepatitis C' and Dan George for contributing to 'Using Mobile Dating Apps for Partner Notification'.

If you would like to submit an article or photo, email the editor at Hannah.Norcini@flhealth.gov.