

## 1 When to test

### People who should be offered testing:

- People born in intermediate or high prevalence country (offer interpreter)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Patients undergoing chemotherapy or immunosuppressive therapy (risk of reactivation)
- Pregnant women
- Infants and children born to mothers who have HBV (>9 months)
- People with clinical presentation of liver disease and/or elevated ALT/AFP of unknown aetiology
- Health professionals who perform exposure prone procedures
- Partner/household/sexual contacts of people with acute or chronic HBV
- People who have ever injected drugs
- Men who have sex with men
- People with multiple sex partners
- People in custodial settings or who have ever been in custodial settings
- People with HIV or hepatitis C, or both
- Patients undergoing dialysis
- Sex workers
- People initiating HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)

Additionally, testing should be offered to anyone upon request.

### When gaining informed consent before testing, discuss:

- Need for an interpreter
- Reason for testing
- Personal implications of a positive test result
- Availability of treatment

For more information [testingportal.ashm.org.au/hbv](http://testingportal.ashm.org.au/hbv)

† Refer to [immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/vaccine-preventable-diseases/hepatitis-b](http://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/vaccine-preventable-diseases/hepatitis-b) for more detail

‡ Refer to [hepatitisc.uw.edu/page/clinical-calculators/apri](http://hepatitisc.uw.edu/page/clinical-calculators/apri) for an APRI calculator

©ASHM 2013. PRODUCED MAY 2013 ISBN: 978-1-921850-45-5. UPDATED IN 2022

## 2 Order tests

### To determine hepatitis B status, order 3 tests.

#### Request:

- **HBsAg** (hepatitis B surface antigen)
- **anti-HBc** (hepatitis B core antibody)
- **anti-HBs** (hepatitis B surface antibody)

If acute HBV is suspected (through recent risk, presentation, or both), anti-HBc IgM can also be ordered.

By ordering all 3 tests you can determine **susceptibility, immunity** through vaccination or past infection, or **current infection**.

All 3 tests are Medicare rebatable simultaneously. Write '? chronic hepatitis B' or similar on the request slip.

## 3 Interpret serology

HBsAg anti-HBc anti-HBs	positive positive negative	<b>Chronic HBV Infection</b> Progress to step 4
HBsAg anti-HBc anti-HBc IgM* anti-HBs	positive positive positive negative	<b>Acute HBV Infection</b> * (high titre) Progress to step 4
HBsAg anti-HBc anti-HBs	negative negative negative	<b>Susceptible or non-immune</b> When there is no documented history of completed vaccination, then vaccination is recommended†
HBsAg anti-HBc anti-HBs	negative positive positive	<b>Immune due to resolved infection</b> Record result and consider family screening
HBsAg anti-HBc anti-HBs	negative negative positive	<b>Immune due to hepatitis B vaccination</b> No action required
HBsAg anti-HBc anti-HBs	negative positive negative	<b>Various possibilities, including: distant resolved infection, recovering from acute HBV, false positive, 'occult' HBV</b> Refer to <a href="http://bpositive.org.au">bpositive.org.au</a> for more details

## 4 Initial assessment if HBsAg positive

### Baseline screening to assess phase of disease:

- HBeAg and anti-HBe
- HBV DNA (quantitative)
- Full blood count
- LFT, INR and alpha fetoprotein (AFP)
- Liver ultrasound


### Refer to graph on next page to determine phase of disease:

#### In addition:

- Test for HAV, HCV, HDV and HIV to check for co-infection. Discuss vaccination if susceptible to HAV and discuss transmission and prevention of BBVs.
- Screen household contacts and sexual partners for HBsAg, anti-HBs and anti-HBc, then vaccinate if susceptible to infection.
- Vaccination is recommended for all high-risk groups and is provided free in many cases.
- Contact your local Health Department for details.

### Assess liver fibrosis – cirrhotic status:

- Signs of cirrhosis
- Non-invasive assessment of fibrosis:
  - Serum biomarkers such as APRI (1.0 or less, cirrhosis unlikely)‡
  - FibroScan assessment if available (>12.5 kPa consistent with cirrhosis)

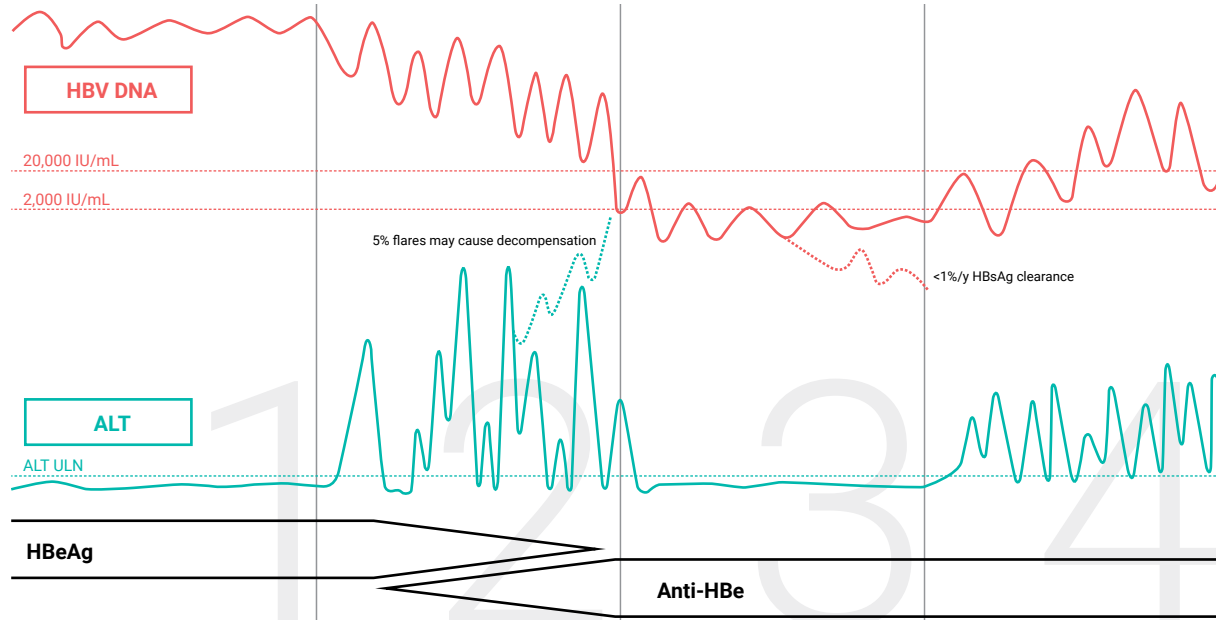


### REFER TO OR DISCUSS WITH A SPECIALIST IF:

- Severe exacerbation (or acute HBV)
- Co-infection with HIV, HCV, or HDV
- Pregnant
- Immunosuppressed
- Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) present
- Has previously been treated with a different hepatitis B medication
- Cirrhosis is present or likely – APRI ≥1 and elastography score not available; elastography >12.5kPa

## 5 Assess phase of infection

Patients with CHB must be **regularly re-evaluated** to determine which phase they are in and managed accordingly.



HBsAg-positive chronic infection (Immune tolerance)	HBsAg-positive chronic hepatitis (Immune clearance)	HBsAg-negative chronic infection (Immune control)	HBsAg-negative chronic hepatitis (Immune escape)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HBV DNA: high<sup>†</sup> &gt;10<sup>7</sup> IU/mL</li> <li>ALT: normal</li> <li>HBsAg positive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HBV DNA: high<sup>†</sup> &gt;20 000 IU/mL</li> <li>ALT: elevated Elevated is &gt;30 IU/L men; &gt;19 IU/L women</li> <li>HBsAg positive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HBV DNA: low<sup>†</sup> &lt;2000 IU/mL</li> <li>ALT: normal</li> <li>HBsAg negative</li> <li>anti-HBe positive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HBV DNA high<sup>†</sup> &gt;2000 IU/mL</li> <li>ALT: elevated Elevated is &gt;30 IU/L men; &gt;19 IU/L women</li> <li>HBsAg negative</li> <li>anti-HBe positive</li> </ul>
Treatment not required	Refer to s100 community prescriber or specialist for consideration of treatment Risk of progression to cirrhosis and HCC	Treatment not required	Refer to s100 community prescriber or specialist for consideration of treatment Risk of progression to cirrhosis and HCC

<sup>†</sup> Medicare covers HBV DNA testing once per year for patients not on treatment and 4 times per year for patient on treatment.

## 6 Provide ongoing monitoring

Regular monitoring is required to identify virological response, resistance and hepatitis flares, and to encourage adherence.

Indication	Monitoring specific to phase	PLUS, monitoring for all phases
<b>HBsAg-positive chronic infection (Immune tolerance)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liver function tests (6-monthly)</li> <li>HBV DNA (12-monthly)<sup>†</sup></li> <li>HBsAg and anti-HBe (6-12 monthly)</li> <li>Assess for liver fibrosis (12-monthly)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Periodic review of household contacts and sexual partners where appropriate</li> <li>If indicated (see below): HCC surveillance</li> </ul>
<b>HBsAg-negative chronic infection (Immune control)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liver function tests (6-monthly)</li> <li>HBV DNA (12-monthly)<sup>†</sup></li> <li>Assess for liver fibrosis (12-monthly)</li> </ul>	
<b>On treatment</b>	<p><b>3-monthly for the first year, then 6-monthly:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liver and renal function tests</li> <li>HBV DNA<sup>†</sup></li> <li>Serum phosphate if on tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (TDF)</li> </ul> <p><b>In addition:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If HBsAg positive at baseline: HBsAg/anti-HBe (6-12 monthly)</li> <li>If HBV DNA undetectable: HBsAg/anti-HBs (12 monthly)</li> <li>If cirrhotic: FBE and INR (3-monthly for the first year, then 6 monthly)</li> </ul> <p>Also assess adherence to treatment every review.</p>	
<b>HBsAg-negative chronic hepatitis (Immune escape)</b> <b>HBsAg-positive chronic hepatitis (Immune clearance)</b>		

### HEPATOCELLULAR CARCINOMA SURVEILLANCE

6-monthly ultrasound with or without AFP is recommended for patients with CHB in these groups:

- People with cirrhosis
- Asian males > 40 years
- Sub-Saharan African people > 20 years
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people > 50 years
- Anyone with observed HBsAg loss with prior indications of HCC
- Māori and Pacific Islander males > 40 years
- Māori and Pacific Islander females > 50 years
- Asian females > 50 years
- Anyone with coinfection with hepatitis delta virus
- Anyone with a family history of HCC (first-degree relative)
- People from other racial groups, according to risk scores (e.g., PAGE-B)