



Hepatitis B Foundation
Cause for a Cure

Hepatitis B Stigma and Discrimination

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February 24 2015

About the Hepatitis B Foundation



The Hepatitis B Foundation is the only national nonprofit organization solely dedicated to finding a cure and improving the lives of those affected by hepatitis B worldwide through research, education and patient advocacy.



HBF was started in response to a young family in 1990 . . .

- In the hospital, the mother was kept in an isolation room and healthcare workers had to fully gown, mask, and glove.
- The affected baby was removed from daycare and unable to return unless the pediatrician could provide a 100% written guarantee that there would be no risk of infection to others.
- Friends expressed anxiety about sharing meals and having the baby share toys with other babies.
- This story has been repeated over and over for the past 25 years.

Stigma and Discrimination

The Hepatitis B Foundation has learned from its Patient Conferences over the past 10 years:

Adults with HBV

- Often feel shame, fear, anxiety, distrust
- Often lose jobs, health insurance, friends, and loved ones

Children with HBV

- Have been required to sit next to the teacher; to eat alone
- Have been excluded from extramural sports, sleepovers or parties

Impact of the HBV Vaccine

The vaccine has been both good and not so good for HBV-infected persons.

The Good: Most adults under 25 years old have been vaccinated against HBV since universal infant vaccination was instituted, so the risk of transmission is greatly reduced in this cohort and reduces the anxiety about disclosure.

The Bad: Colleges and medical/dental/nursing schools are now requiring the HBV vaccine for entry and proof of protective antibodies, which places infected individuals at increased risk for discrimination.

Recent Advocacy Success

- **Early 2011** – HBF received calls from 4 distraught students who faced institutional discrimination from medical and dental schools because of HBV.
- **June 2011** – HBF persuaded CDC to update their guidelines for HBV-infected healthcare workers and students and worked with them on the final recs.
- **Fall 2011** – Nadine Shiroma contacted U.S. Dept. of Justice (DOJ) about the case of 2 students who had been accepted by a New Jersey medical school and then denied admission when their physical exam showed they had chronic HBV.
- **May 2012** – CDC publishes its updated HBV guidelines
- **March 2013** – DOJ reaches successful settlement with NJ medical school and HBV is added as a protected condition under ADA law



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Thank You!

The Hepatitis B Foundation has worked with thousands of individuals and families to provide emotional support and practical assistance in the fight against discrimination.

For more information, please visit us at:

www.hepb.org