

# Hepatitis B

This information is a supplement to [Pharmacists & Publicly Funded Vaccines in B.C.—General Information](#).

## Pharmacist Access Criteria

Publicly funded Hepatitis B vaccine can be requested under the following circumstances:

- For eligible BC residents who present to a pharmacist, and
- On a case by case basis as a supplement to the school based program.

For patients who meet public health eligibility criteria, this publicly funded vaccination is available at no charge to the patient. PharmaCare will pay a \$10 fee to the pharmacy for administering this injection to a person aged 5 years and older (as per [College of Pharmacists of BC Standards, Limits and Conditions](#)).

Other B.C. residents may purchase Hepatitis B vaccine and may pay to have the vaccine administered by an authorized pharmacist. Vaccine costs, including administration supplies and services, are paid for by individuals out of pocket. Selected private drug plans may also cover vaccine costs.

## Products

The publicly funded Hepatitis B vaccines available in B.C. for use in [adults](#) include Engerix® B Adult Formulation, Recombivax HB® Adult Formulation, and Recombivax HB® Adult Dialysis Formulation.

The publicly funded Hepatitis B vaccines available in B.C. for use in the [school based program](#) for children include Engerix® B Adult Formulation and Recombivax HB® Adult Formulation.

For specific information about all Hepatitis B vaccines, refer to each individual product monograph in the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) Immunization Manual [Section VII – Biological Products](#).

## Patient Eligibility

Current recommendations and patient eligibility criteria for publicly funded hepatitis B vaccine are provided within the individual product monographs in the BCCDC Immunization Manual [Section VII – Biological Products](#).

Note: The eligibility criteria for publicly funded Hepatitis B vaccine in B.C. are established by the [BCCDC](#) and may differ from those of the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization](#) (NACI).

## Hepatitis B – Adults

Publicly funded Hepatitis B vaccine is suitable for administration by a pharmacist who provides regular services to eligible B.C. residents (including high risk clients) who present to a pharmacist.

Assessment must be individualized and serology may be required. Pre and post exposure indications require different approaches.

Hemodialysis clients require a specific hepatitis B vaccine dosage and series. Please refer to the [Hepatitis B Vaccine Program for Chronic Kidney Disease Clients](#) page in the BCCDC Immunization Manual for more information.

Current recommendations and patient eligibility criteria for publicly funded Hepatitis B vaccine in adults are provided within the individual product monographs in the BCCDC Immunization Manual [Section VII – Biological Products](#).

## Hepatitis B - School Based Program for Children

If a request comes in to the pharmacy to administer a Hepatitis B vaccine to a person eligible to receive it as part of the school-based program, the pharmacist should contact the local health unit to review the case and arrange for vaccine product to be released if appropriate.

Current recommendations and patient eligibility criteria for publicly funded Hepatitis B vaccine as part of a school-based program for children are provided within the individual product monographs in the BCCDC Immunization Manual [Section VII – Biological Products](#).

## Special Considerations

### Administration

Engerix®-B Adult Formulation and Recombivax®HB Adult Formulation are interchangeable at any dose, using age-specific dosages and recommended schedules for each product.

For specific information about all Hepatitis B vaccines, refer to each individual product monograph in the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) Immunization Manual [Section VII – Biological Products](#).

### Documentation

Reporting of administration of Hepatitis B vaccine for Grade 6 students as part of the publicly funded [school based program](#) is recommended and highly encouraged.

### Vaccine Ordering

High volume sites (i.e. pharmacies designated to provide Harm Reduction or Methadone Services) may benefit from having some Hepatitis B vaccine regularly on hand to enable prompt vaccination of eligible B.C. residents when the opportunity arises. These sites should have a discussion with their local health unit.