

Physician's Short Guide to Hepatitis B

The Facts

- Hepatitis B is an infection of the liver caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV) that can cause premature death from liver disease.
- **1 in 20** people worldwide (350 million) is chronically infected.

HBV is a Silent Killer

- Chronic infection often shows no symptoms. As many as **2 out of 3** are not aware of their infection.
- If left untreated, **1 in 4** will die from HBV-related causes.
- By the time symptoms appear, it is often too late for treatment.

Transmission Methods: BBS

- **B**irth: Infected mothers unknowingly pass HBV to their children at birth.
- **B**lood: Direct contact with infected blood.
- **S**ex: Unprotected sex with infected partners.

Vulnerable Populations

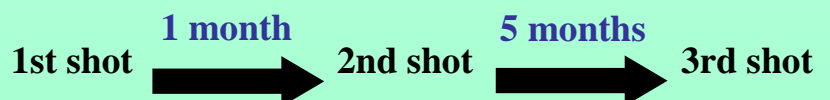
- HBV disproportionately affects Asian Americans. **1 in 12** is living with chronic infection compared to 1 in 1000 non-Asian Americans.
- Asian Americans account for >50% of the 1 million infected in the U.S.
- 2008 CDC guidelines call for screening of all persons from Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, Middle East, and South America **regardless of immunization history**.

Screening is Important to:

- Identify chronically infected individuals early.
- Identify unprotected individuals so they can be vaccinated.
- Avoid unnecessary vaccination.

Vaccination

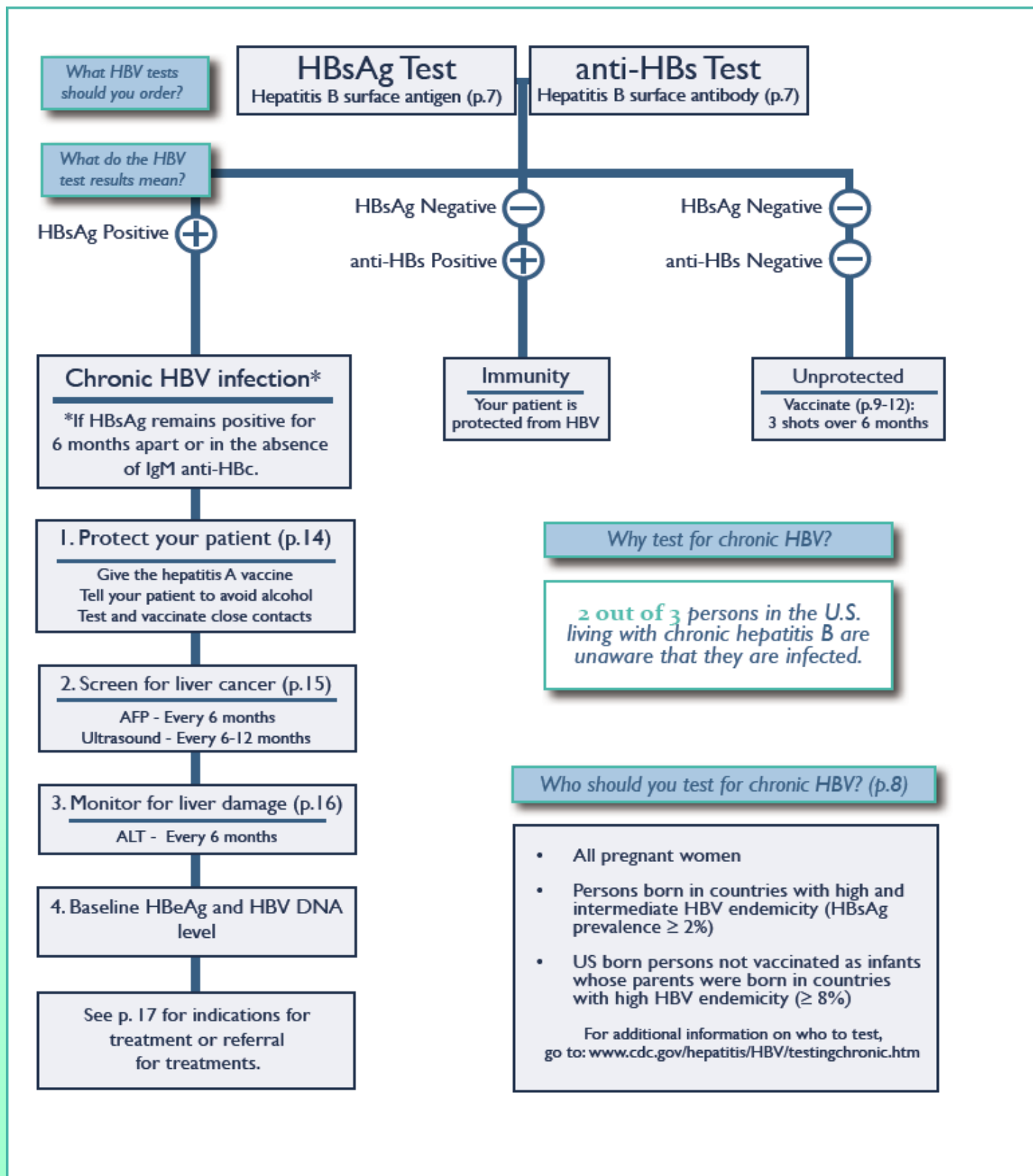
- The 3 shot sequence can be started at any age and protects patients for life:



What Can Physicians Do To Increase Screening?

- Ask patients if they are foreign-born or have foreign-born parents. If so, screen for HBsAg and anti-HBs.
- Keep educational HBV brochures in the waiting area (order **free** brochures at <http://liver.stanford.edu>).

Summary of Chronic Infection Diagnosis and Management



Physician's Short Guide to Hepatitis B produced by Team HBV at Emory (<http://teamhbv.org>).



For page references, more information, and additional resources, see the full version of the Asian Liver Center's 2012 Physicians Guide to Hepatitis B at <http://liver.stanford.edu/Education/physicians.html>.