

According to Senate Bill No. 712 approved 2/16/2005, full-time students enrolled for the first time in any four-year public institution of higher education shall be vaccinated against hepatitis B. There is a provision for a waiver of this requirement if the institution of higher education provides the student detailed information on the risks associated with hepatitis B disease and the availability and effectiveness of being vaccinated.

WHAT IS HEPATITIS B?

Hepatitis B is a highly contagious virus which infects the liver. It can strike silently and cause life-threatening liver damage. People in their teens and twenties are at greater risk of contracting hepatitis B than any other age group. Hepatitis B is the most common contagious liver disease, in the United States.

HOW IS HEPATITIS B VIRUS SPREAD?

Hepatitis B virus is spread through contact with the blood and body fluids of an infected person. A person can get infected by having unprotected sex with an infected person, by sharing needles when injecting illegal drugs, by being stuck with a used needle on the job, or during birth when the virus passes from an infected mother to her baby.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Often there are no symptoms, so some people have hepatitis B and never know it. Others feel very ill and are unable to work for weeks or months. Hepatitis B can be lethal. Symptoms of hepatitis B may be similar to a stomach virus.

HOW CAN COLLEGE STUDENTS PROTECT THEMSELVES?

Get vaccinated! The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other public health officials recommend hepatitis B vaccine for adolescents to protect them and to control hepatitis B in the United States. Young adults need to protect themselves before they become sexually active and before they are exposed to hepatitis B-before it is too late.

WHAT DOES THE VACCINATION ENTAIL?

The vaccine, an injection, is given in the arm, in three doses over a 6 month period. It is important to get all three doses to be protected. As with most vaccinations, there is some soreness in the arm for a day, but other mild side effects such as fever and nausea are rare.

WHAT IS THE EFFECTIVENESS AND THE AVAILABILITY OF THE VACCINE?

The vaccine is 80% to 100% effective in preventing infection or clinical hepatitis in those who receive the complete course of vaccine.

The vaccination is available at your private physician's office, your local health department and/or the Student Health Center at the College of William and Mary, while supplies last. There will be a fee for the immunization. At the Student Health Center the fee is \$40 per dose (price subject to change).

A written waiver must be signed by the student, or their parent or guardian if the student is a minor, and chooses NOT to be vaccinated against hepatitis B:

I _____ (print name of student) (insert Student ID Number)
ID# _____ have read the above detailed information on the risks associated with hepatitis B disease and on the availability and effectiveness of the hepatitis B vaccine. I have reviewed and understand this information.

After receipt and review of the aforementioned information on hepatitis B disease and the availability and effectiveness of the hepatitis B vaccine, I have chosen not to be vaccinated against hepatitis.

Signed Student/Parent or Guardian if the student is a minor

Date

Student's Date of Birth