



Hepatitis B (HBV) Fact Sheet: Asian and Pacific Islander Americans

General Worldwide HBV Facts:

- There are approximately 350 million people worldwide with chronic hepatitis B (CHB)¹
- CHB is the tenth leading cause of death worldwide.²
- The hepatitis B virus (HBV) is responsible for up to 80 percent of the world's liver cancer.²
- Left untreated, CHB can result in cirrhosis (liver scarring), liver failure, and death.³
- Once HBV infection has occurred, vaccination has no effect on the disease.
- Asia has the highest HBV infection rates in the world.²
- Hepatitis B takes a life every 30 seconds.⁴
- In the United States, an estimated 1.25 million people are chronically infected with HBV.³
 - Asian and Pacific Islander Americans make up more than half of this number.

HBV in Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Americans:⁴

- The incidence of hepatitis B and liver cancer constitutes the greatest health disparity between API-Americans and the general U.S. population.
 - One in 10 API-Americans have CHB compared with one in 1,000 for the general U.S. population
 - One in eight Vietnamese-Americans have CHB
 - One in 10 Chinese-Americans have CHB
 - One in 12 Koreans-Americans have CHB
 - Without treatment or monitoring, one in four will die from liver cancer or liver failure.
- In California alone, liver cancer is:
 - The second leading cause of cancer deaths among Cambodian and Vietnamese men living in the U.S.
 - The fourth leading cause of cancer deaths among Chinese and Korean men living in the U.S.
 - The fifth leading cause of deaths among Filipino men living in the U.S.
- Among API-Americans, transmission of HBV frequently occurs during the birthing process when the virus is passed on from an infected mother.
 - The infected mother is often unaware that she is an HBV carrier.
 - Over 90% of infants from age 0-1 who become infected with HBV will become chronic carriers.

¹World Health Organization. Hepatitis B fact sheet number 204. Available at <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs204/en/>

²Lavanchy D. *Journal of Viral Hepatitis*. 2004 Mar 11 (2): 97-107, ³Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hepatitis B frequently asked questions. Available at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis/b/faqb.htm, ⁴Asian Liver Center at Stanford University/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. HBV a Silent Killer. Available at <http://liver.stanford.edu/files/2005Handbook.pdf> Accessed 5/9/06.