



**Northwestern  
Health Unit**

[www.nwhu.on.ca](http://www.nwhu.on.ca)

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### **Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Promotes Hepatitis B Prevention Program in Ontario**

Hepatitis B is one of several viral infections that can affect the liver. Hepatitis B is spread by contact with body fluids – blood, semen, vaginal fluids and saliva, and can be passed to newborns from infected mothers. At least half of those infected have no symptoms, but all of those who are infected can pass the virus on to other people. Infected people who do have symptoms may experience nausea, fever, fatigue, dark urine, abdominal pain, enlarged liver and jaundice. The Hepatitis B virus can damage the liver permanently. It is estimated that this virus causes about 80% of all liver cancers.

There is no cure for hepatitis, but the Hepatitis B vaccine is more than 90% effective in preventing infection. It is a safe vaccine and has been used in Canada for more than 20 years.

The 2011-2012 Hepatitis B immunization campaign will again target Grade 7 students. Public Health Nurses will give students two injections over a six-month period using a vaccine product licensed for adolescents 11 to 15 years of age.

Parents, students, and the general public who have questions may contact their local Northwestern Health Unit office or visit [www.nwhu.on.ca](http://www.nwhu.on.ca).

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