

NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
College of Health Sciences and Professional Studies
Hepatitis B Policy

Hepatitis B Policy Rationale

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) www.cdc.gov, health care personnel are among the high-risk groups for Hepatitis B infection. Health science students are at risk for infection caused by the Hepatitis B virus because they are often exposed to blood and body fluids during their clinical practice. Your individual risk is directly related to how often you are exposed to blood and other body fluids.

Hepatitis B is primarily a blood-borne pathogen with lower concentrations of virus found in semen, vaginal fluid, and saliva. Between 5% and 70% of Hepatitis B infections are asymptomatic, 20%-30% of those infected exhibit clinical jaundice followed by a benign resolution of the infection. Approximately 10% of infected individuals become chronic carriers of the virus for more than 6 months and have a higher risk of liver disease, including liver failure, liver cancer or cirrhosis.

In view of the hazards associated with Hepatitis B, as cited by the Centers for Disease Control, the College of Health Sciences and Professional Studies at Northern Michigan University recommends that every student in its programs consult with their personal physician or health care provider and seriously consider vaccination with the Recombivax HB vaccine prior to admission to his or her major. The CDC recommends vaccination for anyone frequently exposed to blood and other body fluids in the workplace. Serum derived from the genetically engineered Recombivax HB is considered safe and effective by CDC. Between 90% and 96% of those who receive the full course of therapy (through injections) acquire immunity, which seems to be long term. As in the case with many infectious diseases and the use of vaccinations there is an element of risk and no assurance of full protection. You should inform yourself thoroughly and consult with your personal physician or health care provider.

I acknowledge that I have read the College's rationale regarding Hepatitis B and Hepatitis B vaccines. My questions regarding this disease and the vaccines available have been satisfactorily answered. I shall assume full responsibility for consulting with a physician or health care provider on this matter.

I understand that receiving the vaccine is strongly recommended but is entirely voluntary and is not a condition for being a student in the College of Health Sciences and Professional Studies. I also understand that, should I accept the vaccine, it is my responsibility to complete the series of three injections as recommended. The second injection in the series will be given one month after the first injection, and the final injection will be given six months from the first.

___ I have already received a Hepatitis B vaccine and I will supply verification of this.

___ I hereby request that I be given Recombivax HB or Heplisav vaccine. I understand that I must make arrangements for this at the NMU Health Center or other health care provider and that it is at my expense.

___ I hereby decline the vaccine, and release the College of Health Sciences and Professional Studies, all employees and Board members of the University of liability in the event that I become infected with the Hepatitis B virus.

I fully recognize the hazards in health care professions and hereby hold Northern Michigan University harmless from any liability resulting from its action in providing me with the information set forth in the Hepatitis B policy on this form and further hold the University harmless from any liability from my voluntary decision to be vaccinated or to decline to be vaccinated.

Student Name _____ Program _____

Signature _____ Date _____