

The Hepatitis B-Initiative

Presented by Grace Tsai, Ph.D.
Development Director

The Hepatitis B Initiative
www.hepbinitiative.org



The Hepatitis B Initiative

- The Hepatitis B Initiative is a grass-roots, community organization dedicated to raising awareness among Asian Americans about hepatitis B.
- Founded in 1997 by Leslie and Thomas Oh, HBI has become the only faith-based model in the nation addressing hepatitis B in the Asian American community.
- Staff members are: SunHi Kim and Grace Tsai



The Hepatitis B Initiative

The mission of HBI is to mobilize communities to prevent hepatitis B and its consequences among at-risk groups, particularly Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders by:

- developing culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach materials on hepatitis B
- collaborating with existing community resources to launch educational campaigns
- providing free screenings and vaccinations to all individuals



Eight years of experience

- 1997-Award winning program founded by medical and public health students at Harvard (expanded to graduate and undergraduate schools in the Boston area).
- 2002-At the request of CDC and the National Taskforce on Hepatitis B: Focus on Asians and Pacific Islanders, HBI expands the program to the DC, Maryland, and Virginia area.
- HBI-DC and HBI-Boston are both dedicated to the mission of raising awareness of hepatitis B.



Why should you care?

- Chinese Americans are 6 times higher at risk for hepatitis B; Korean Americans are 8 times higher risk and Vietnamese Americans are at 13 times higher risk for hepatitis B compared to white Americans.
- Although Asian Americans represent 4% of the population, they account for over half of the 1.25 million chronic hepatitis B cases and half of the 5,000 deaths/year in the United States.
- There is a safe and effective vaccine which will protect you for life from hepatitis B, if you have not yet been exposed.
- Maryland and Virginia are two of the twelve states with highest number of Asians at risk for hepatitis B.



HBI-DC Korean campaign

- Launched pilot program with Korean faith-based community due to high rates of no health insurance.
- 1368 individuals screened and 62% vaccinated due to having never been exposed to hepatitis B at locations where community gathers (for ex: church) and 78% completed 3-shot series.
- A Korean bilingual toolkit (containing education, screening, and vaccination materials created through extensive community input) was released in June 2005.





Master Jhoon Rhee, member of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, gets screened at one of HBI-DC's events.

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Dr. Kenneth Moritsugu, Deputy Surgeon General, speaks at HBI-DC event.

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Participatory
learning
development on all
HBI-DC materials

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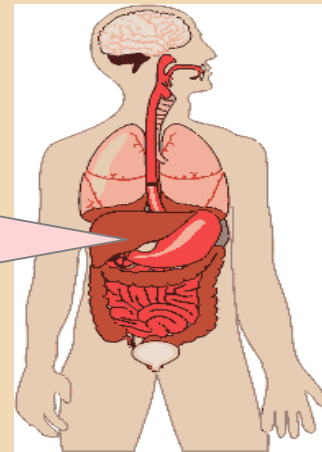
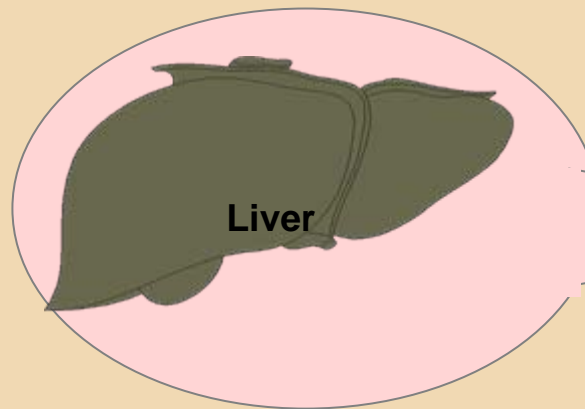
HBI-DC's MODEL

- **June-August:** HBI-DC's Training Series
- **September:** Screening Event.
- *A physician volunteer will be responsible for accepting the lab results of the screenings and personally calling those who are diagnosed as positive for HbsAg and negative for HbsAb. The administrative coordinator volunteer will be responsible for collecting all paperwork and coordinating volunteer activities.*
- **October:** 1st Vaccination.
- **November:** 2nd Vaccination
- **April:** 3rd Vaccination



What is hepatitis B?

- Hepatitis B is caused by a virus (the hepatitis B virus) that gets into your body through blood and body fluids and attacks your liver. It can cause liver damage (cirrhosis), liver cancer, liver failure.



How do you get hepatitis B?

The hepatitis B virus is found in the blood and other bodily fluids. It can be passed from:

- Close personal contact to blood or body fluids of infected individual
- Mother to child, during birth
- Sharing toothbrushes or razors or needles
- Unprotected sex
- Getting a tattoo, ear or body piercing
- **NOT sneezing, coughing, sharing food or dishes, holding hands or even a mother's breast milk**

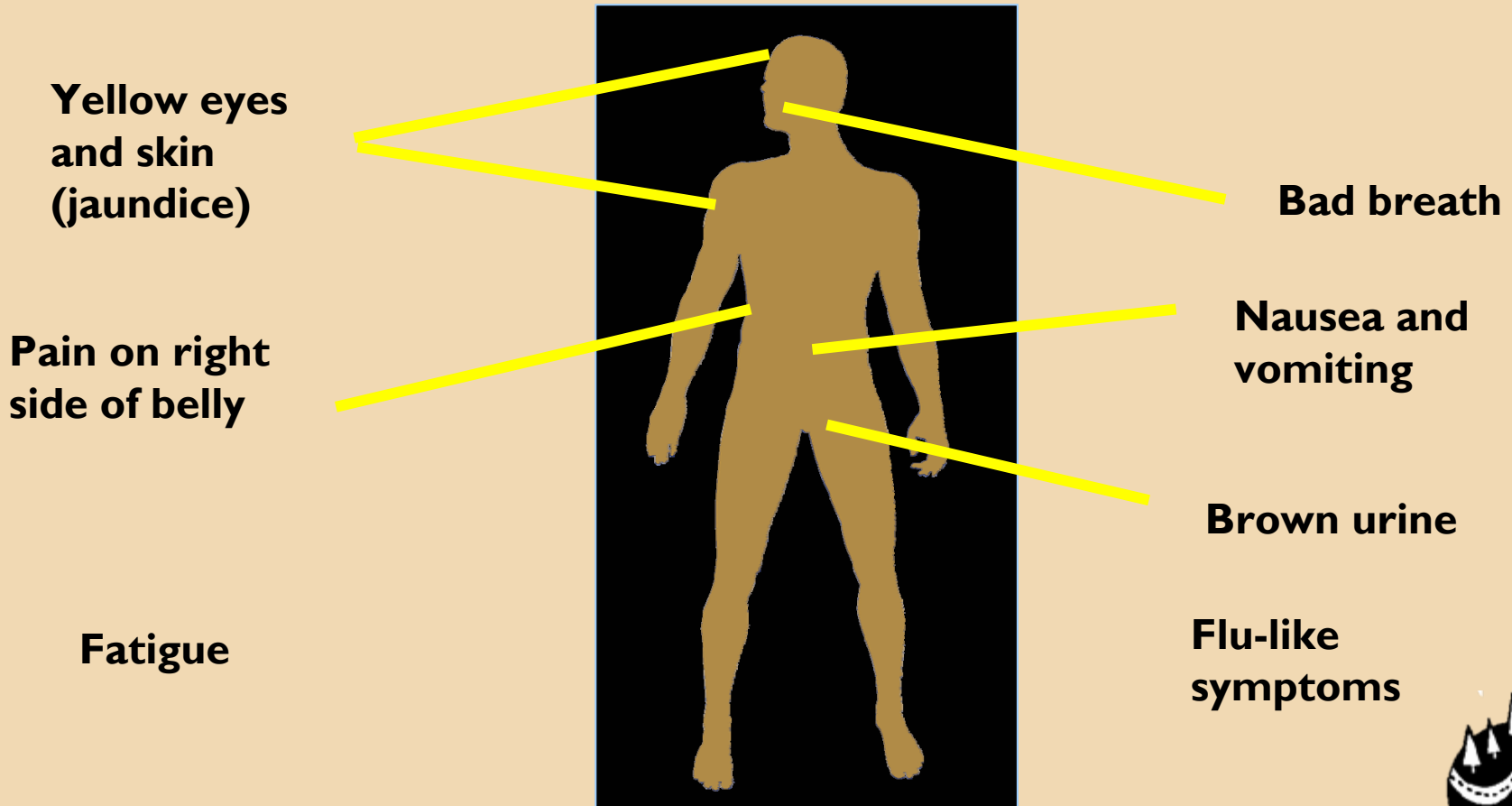


Why is hepatitis B so dangerous?

- Silent disease (no symptoms for majority of those infected with hep B)
- People who are exposed to hepatitis B have 95% chance of becoming immune on their own. If their body does not fight it off, they become chronically infected with hepatitis B
- Early detection for hepatitis B carrier is critical
- One out of 4 people with chronic hepatitis B virus infection who became chronically infected during childhood will die of hepatitis B virus-related liver cancer or cirrhosis (as early as 30 years of age)



Common signs of chronic hepatitis B



Is there a cure?

- Hepatitis b is NOT curable, but controllable.
- The hepatitis B vaccination however, is proven to be 95% effective in preventing the spread of the hepatitis B virus.
- This vaccine is the 1st cancer prevention vaccine offered (preventing liver cancer).



Treatment

- Injections given every day or every other day for up to 6 months (Interferon alfa)
- Antiviral drugs (a pill a day)
 - Lamivudine — daily pill
 - Adefovir — daily pill
- Liver transplantation
- **Hepatitis B Information and Support List: visit www.hblist.org**

