

## Hepatitis D School Health Manual

### Definition:

Hepatitis D is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis D virus (HDV). HDV can only cause infection in people who also have the hepatitis B virus (HBV). HDV can range from a short-term illness lasting less than 6 months to a lifelong illness that occurs when HDV remains in a person's body and causes inflammation of the liver. Over time, this can cause cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver, liver cancer, liver failure, and death. HDV is uncommon in the United States.

### Signs and symptoms:

The signs and symptoms of HDV are like those of HBV and can include loss of appetite, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, arthritis pain, rash, and jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes). Sometimes, a person with HDV has no symptoms at all. Symptoms usually start 90 days after exposure but can start as early as 14 days or as late as 160 days after exposure.

### Transmission:

HDV is spread by contact with blood, semen, and other body fluids infected with HDV primarily through:

- Contaminated blood products
- Sexual contact with an infected person
- Needlesticks or other sharp instrument injuries
- Sharing of contaminated needles, syringes, or other injection drug equipment
- It can also be spread to household members with hepatitis B

### Diagnosis:

HDV is diagnosed by a blood tests.

### Role of the School Nurse:

#### Prevention

- There is no vaccination for HDV.
- The best way to prevent HDV is for children to receive all three shots of the Hepatitis B vaccine.
- Standard precautions should be used for all children and staff in the school setting.

#### Treatment Recommendations

- If a student has symptoms compatible with hepatitis infection, they should be referred immediately to his or her primary care provider or local emergency department for further evaluation.

### Exclusions:

No exclusions are indicated for students or staff with HDV. Standard precautions should be used for all students and staff.

### Reporting Requirements:

HDV is a reportable condition and should be reported to Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.

### Resources:

- Federal CDC Hepatitis D website  
<https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hdv/index.htm>