How can I protect my baby if I am a carrier?

- Be careful not to let your blood come in contact with your baby.
- Wash your hands well after touching your blood, bloody body fluids, or vaginal fluids.
- Cover cuts and open wounds (on yourself or your baby) with a bandage, so no drainage comes in contact with your baby.
- Clean up any blood spills. Disinfect with a bleach solution (one part household bleach to 10 parts water).
- Do not chew your baby's food.
- Do not share your baby's toothbrush or other personal hygiene articles.
- You may safely breast-feed your baby if he or she is receiving the hepatitis B vaccine, but stop if you develop cracked nipples or open sores on your breast.

For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. Please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD relay 1-800-833-6388).

Washington State Department of Health
Immunization Program
DOH Pub 348-009 12/99

Adapted from State of California, State of Hawaii, and Seattle-King County Department of Public Health

HEPATITIS B

How to Protect Your Baby

You may be a hepatitis B carrier and not know it! But you can take steps now so your baby will not become infected. Don't take the risk that your baby will suffer needlessly from incurable liver disease in later life!

What is Hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a serious liver infection. It is caused by the hepatitis B virus and spread by infected mothers to their newborns during childbirth.

What are the symptoms of Hepatitis B?

Some of the symptoms are loss of appetite, tiredness, nausea, jaundice (yellow skin and eyes) or dark urine. However, some people infected with hepatitis B may have no symptoms and may not feel or look sick. Some people recover after a few months and develop protection against being infected again. Others become carriers and carry the virus in their bodies for years or for life.

What may happen if my baby is infected?

Most infected babies won't show signs of illness, but will become hepatitis B carriers. Carriers may develop serious liver disease such as cirrhosis and cancer in their early adult lives.

Can I pass Hepatitis B to my baby even if I don't feel sick?

YES. An infected pregnant woman can pass this disease to her baby. This usually happens during the birth process. Close contact with the mother following the birth also exposes the baby to the virus which is present in the mother's body fluids.

How can I protect my baby?

Get a blood test from your doctor. If you are infected with hepatitis B, your baby will be started on a series of hepatitis B shots. Your baby will receive Hepatitis B Immune Globulin (HBIG) and the hepatitis B vaccine at birth, then will need hepatitis B vaccine two more times before 6 months of age. If any of these shots are missed, your child will not have enough protection. It is extremely important to make sure your baby gets all of these shots on time.

How can I protect the rest of my family?

Follow the guidelines on the back page. Also, other members of your household should see their doctor for hepatitis B screening and vaccination.

Washington State Department of Health

Dear Colleague,

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) is pleased to provide camera-ready art for printing this educational material. To ensure that the original quality of the piece is maintained, please read and follow the instructions below and the specifications included for professional printing.

- **Use the latest version**. DOH materials are developed using the most current information available, are checked for clinical accuracy, and are field tested with the intended audience to ensure they are clear and readable. DOH programs make periodic revisions to educational materials, so please check this web site to be sure you have the latest version. DOH assumes no responsibility for the use of this material or for any errors or omissions.

- **Do not alter**. We are providing this artwork with the understanding that it will be printed without alterations and copies will be free to the public. Do not edit the text or use illustrations or photographs for other purposes without first contacting us. Please do not alter or remove the DOH logo, publication number or revision date. If you want to use a part of this publication for other purposes, contact the Office of Health Promotion first.

- **For quality reproduction**: Low resolution PDF files are intended for black and white or color desktop printers. They work best if you are making only one or two copies. High resolution PDF files are intended for reproducing large quantities and are set up for use by professional offset print shops. The high resolution files also include detailed printing specifications. Please match them as closely as possible and insist on the best possible quality for all reproductions.

If you have questions, contact:
Office of Health Promotion
P.O. Box 47833 Olympia, WA 98504-7833
(360) 236-3736

Sincerely,
Health Education Resource Exchange Web Team

PRINTING SPECIFICATIONS

Title:	**Hepatitis B: How to Protect Your Baby**
Size:	11 x 8.5
Paper stock:	65# cover Wausau Astrobrights Neptune Blue
Ink color:	Black
Special instructions:	2-sided printing. Finished job folds to 5.5 x 8.5
DOH Pub #:	348-009