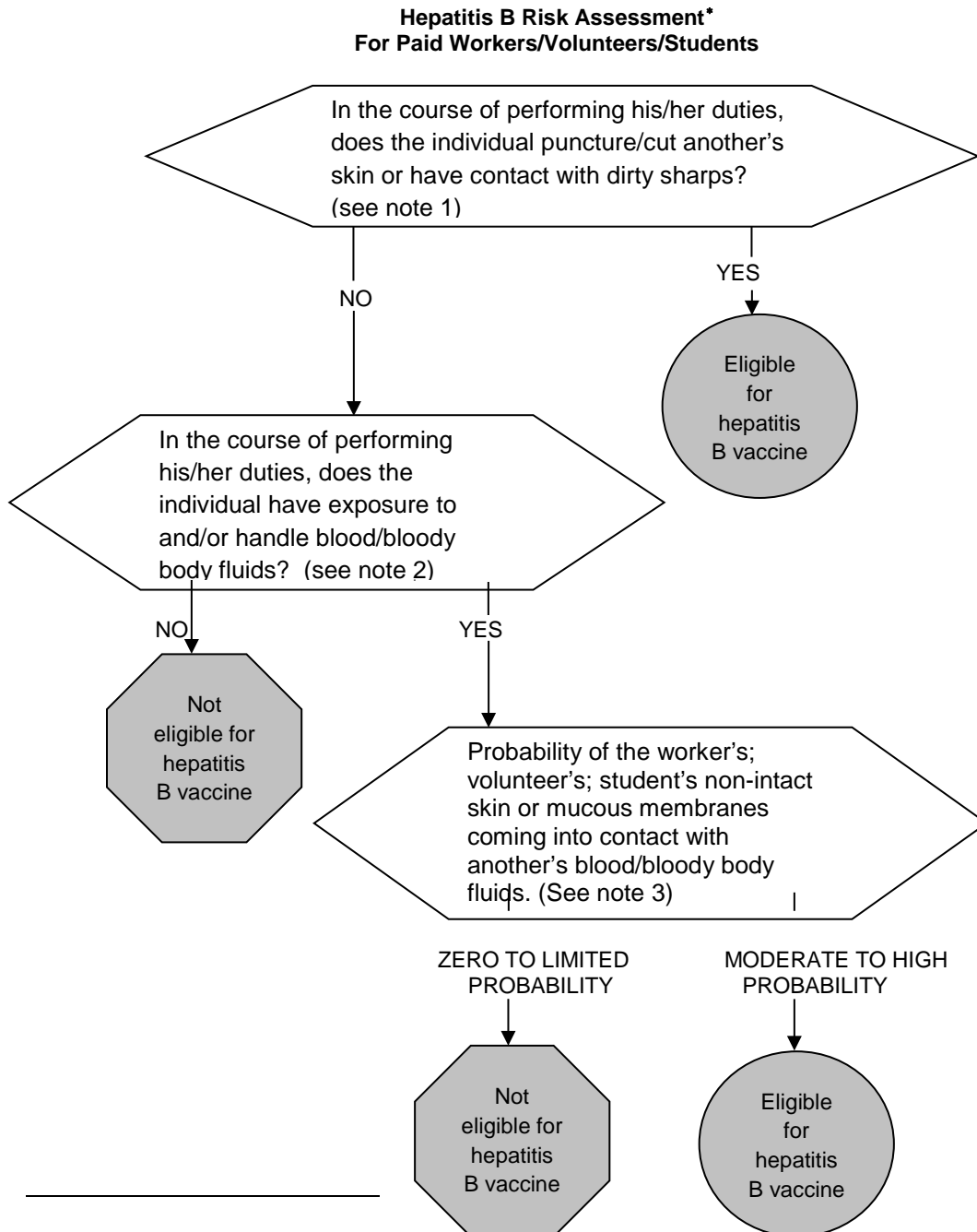


## Hepatitis B Virus Infection Risk Assessment for Paid Workers/ Volunteers/Students

Revision Date: February 10, 2015



\* This tool is to be used in conjunction with Alberta Immunization Policy: [Provision of Occupational Vaccines](#). It may be used in **circumstances of uncertainty** to assist with determining eligibility for hepatitis B vaccine. **The clinical judgement of the nurse interviewing the client takes precedence.**

## Hepatitis B Risk Assessment for Paid Workers; Students; Volunteers Explanatory Notes for Flow Chart

### Note 1:

Workers, students and volunteers who, in the course of performing their duties, puncture or cut another person's skin should receive the hepatitis B vaccine. This includes administering injections, body piercing or tattooing. Those who handle or have contact with dirty sharps in the course of performing their duties should receive the hepatitis B vaccine.

### Note 2:

The type of fluid and the type of potential injury (see Note 3) are important considerations for assessing risk. Body fluids that are visibly contaminated with blood can transmit hepatitis B virus (HBV). Blood, serum, plasma, semen, vaginal secretions and saliva as well as other body fluids (pleural, amniotic, pericardial, peritoneal, synovial and cerebrospinal) may contain the virus.<sup>1</sup> Transmission from breast milk is unlikely.<sup>1</sup> Feces, nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, and vomitus are not implicated unless they are visibly contaminated with blood.<sup>1</sup>

### Note 3:

In addition to assessing the type of fluids (see Note 2), the probability of certain types of injuries occurring to an individual while performing his or her duties, should be considered. In relation to the risk of transmission of HBV, the probability of injuries involving contact with blood/ body fluids (as described in Note 2) with non-intact skin or tissue under the skin (as in a bite when the skin is broken) or mucous membranes, should be assessed.<sup>2</sup>

Zero to limited probability for such exposures or injuries is approximately that which a general member of the public might expect to encounter in day to day life outside of work. Incidental exposures that may take place on the job or at the work site, and that are not ordinarily expected, do not present a reasonable risk. In addition, the risk of transmission of HBV in settings such as schools, playgrounds, daycare and group homes is generally limited<sup>2</sup> especially with routine childhood hepatitis B immunization and is adequately controlled using common hygienic measures. However, if a resident or child in such settings is known to have hepatitis B infection, refer to the Alberta Immunization Policy for guidelines regarding immunization of staff/others.

### References

<sup>1</sup> Alberta Health. *Public Health Notifiable Disease Management Guidelines – Hepatitis B (Acute Case)*. [www.health.alberta.ca/professionals/notifiable-diseases-guide.html](http://www.health.alberta.ca/professionals/notifiable-diseases-guide.html)

<sup>2</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada. (1997). An integrated protocol to manage health care workers exposed to bloodborne pathogens. *Canada Communicable Disease Report*; 23(S2: 2)

<sup>3</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada. (1997). Preventing the transmission of bloodborne pathogens in health care and public service settings. *Canada Communicable Disease Report*. 23(S3:30) [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/ccdr-rmtc/97vol23/23s3/index.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/ccdr-rmtc/97vol23/23s3/index.html)