

| Test   | Description  |
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| Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg)              | Shows whether the person has current hepatitis B virus infection. In chronic HBV infection, HBsAg is always detected.  |
| Hepatitis B surface antibody (HBsAb or anti-HBs) | Shows whether the person is developing immunity to HBV. It can be present while the person still has the virus (HBsAg positive). If HBsAg is negative and HBsAb is positive it means the person is immune either from vaccination or past infection.   |
| Hepatitis B e antigen (HBeAg)                    | Usually detected in the absence of anti-HBe. Shows the hepatitis virus is multiplying at a high rate and is therefore very infectious. The HbeAg-positive phase is the earliest stage of HBV infection and the most common one in children and young adults.   |
| Hepatitis B e antibody (HBeAb or anti-HBe)       | Usually detected in the absence of HBeAg. This later phase of HBV infection follows the development of the patient's immune response against HBeAg and is the most common phase of HBV infection found in middle-aged and elderly patients. This phase is usually associated with suppression of the virus and reduction in level of viral replication. However, HbeAg-negative patients are still infectious. They may still have active liver disease and could progress to cirrhosis. |
| Hepatitis B core antibody (HBcAb or anti-HBc)    | Shows whether a person has ever been exposed to the hepatitis B virus. Is detected in patients with current infection and people with previous acute infection that has resolved. Is not detected in individuals who have immunity through vaccination.  |
| Anti HBC IgM+                                    | Always detected during acute infection and may be the only marker of acute infection in the 'window phase', when HBsAg has disappeared and anti-HBs levels are not yet high enough to be detected.   |
| Hepatitis B virus DNA (HBV DNA)                  | Measures the amount of hepatitis B virus present in the blood (viral load). High HBV DNA levels are one of the criteria for commencing anti-viral therapy (along with high ALT or advanced fibrosis stage). The HBV DNA level is one of the most important prognostic factors for the development of complications of hepatitis B.   |