

Hepatitis B, Chronic

2011 Case Definition

Clinical Evidence

No symptoms are required. Persons with chronic HBV infection may have no evidence of liver disease or may have a spectrum of disease ranging from chronic hepatitis to cirrhosis or liver cancer.

Laboratory criteria for diagnosis

- IgM antibodies to hepatitis B core antigen (IgM anti-HBc) negative AND a positive result on one of the following tests: hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg), hepatitis B e antigen (HBeAg), or hepatitis B virus (HBV) DNA

OR

- HBsAg positive or HBV DNA positive or HBeAg positive two times at least 6 months apart (Any combination of these tests performed 6 months apart is acceptable)

Case classification

Confirmed: a case that meets either of the above laboratory criteria for diagnosis

Probable: a person with a single HBsAg positive or HBV DNA positive or HBeAg positive lab result and does not meet the case definition for acute hepatitis B.

Comment

Multiple laboratory tests indicative of chronic HBV infection may be performed simultaneously on the same patient specimen as part of a "hepatitis panel." Testing performed in this manner may lead to seemingly discordant results, e.g., HBsAg-negative AND HBV DNA-positive. For the purposes of this case definition, any positive result among the three laboratory tests mentioned above is acceptable, regardless of other testing results. Negative HBeAg results and HBV DNA levels below positive cutoff level do not confirm the absence of HBV infection.