

TWINRIX COMBINED HEPATITIS A AND B VACCINE

HEPATITIS B is a DNA virus that will affect up to 30% of those exposed, half of whom will be asymptomatic. Others have varying degrees of illness that may cause anorexia, abdominal pain, nausea, and jaundice. Acute illness may last up to 3 months with a 1-2% death rate. 3-10% of adults infected become chronic carriers capable of transmitting the disease by blood or semen. Infection occurs from 45 to 160 days after exposure with an average of 120 days. Less than 1 % of the Canadian population is infectious.

HEPATITIS A is an RNA virus that is transmitted by contact with infected people, water or food. Symptoms are similar to other hepatitises. Recovery usually takes 4-6 weeks. 15% of those affected have recurrences in the subsequent year. Hepatitis A does not become chronic. 25% of affected adults need hospitalization. Fatal liver necrosis is rare. 0.1-0.3% of all cases die, but 1.8% die when aged >50 years and 12.5% if aged >60 years.

IMMUNIZATION RESPONSE with Twinrix after the third dose is 100% for both types of antibodies. One month after the second dose 99% of recipients have HAV antibodies and 96.5% have HBV antibodies.

IMMUNIZATION WITH TWINRIX IS RECOMMENDED for travellers to countries where poor sanitation might lead to hepatitis A infection, where poor health services might lead to hepatitis B from a blood transfusion or where sexual relations with an infected person might occur. Three doses, two a month apart and one five months after the second are recommended. Protection lasts for at least fifteen years. Though titres drop, immune memory persists providing continuing protection . 50-70% of non -responders will develop antibodies after a second immunization.

CONTRAINDICATIONS to vaccination include anaphylactic reactions to aluminum hydroxide or a previous dose of Twinrix or any monovalent hepatitis vaccine. Single dose syringes have latex stoppers in them and should not be used if a latex allergy exists.

ADVERSE REACTIONS are mild – usually injection site discomfort, fatigue, headache, malaise or a transient fever of less than 37.7 degrees. Vaccine component allergy causes anaphylaxis rarely. To prevent bleeding in those with bleeding disorders injections are given subcutaneously but with a less than optimum antibody response.

CONSENT

I have read the information above and understand the risks and benefits involved in receiving Twinrix vaccine. I have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I agree to receive one or more of the recommended series of Twinrix vaccine.

Name _____ Signature _____
Date _____ Witness _____