



B SURE, B TESTED, B FREE: FACT SHEET

ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO HEP B FREE

The San Francisco Hep B Free Campaign <http://sfhepbfree.org> is a ‘first-in-the-nation’ effort calling on the collaboration of a wide spectrum of organizations to educate the public about the health risks of the hepatitis B virus (HBV) and to promote routine HBV screenings and vaccinations for the city’s Asian and Pacific Islander (API) population.

THE PROBLEM: HBV – A SAN FRANCISCO EPIDEMIC

Hepatitis B is a serious disease of the liver caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV) that can lead to acute illness and chronic infection including cirrhosis, liver failure or liver cancer. It is a silent killer affecting approximately 1.4 million Americans, of which more than half are of API descent.

HBV is an epidemic within San Francisco’s API community. An estimated **one in 10 APIs have an undiagnosed infection**. APIs are up to 100 times more likely to suffer from chronic HBV infection and four times more likely to die from liver cancer compared with the general population. Hepatitis B is responsible for 80% of all liver cancers among APIs, who have the highest rates of liver cancer for any racial or ethnic group. **San Francisco’s liver cancer rate is highest in the nation.**

Hepatitis B is 100 times more infectious than HIV and is easily transmitted – from an infected mother to her child at birth, through unprotected sex or by contaminated blood on shared toothbrushes, razors or needles. There are often no symptoms and as many as two out of three of the chronically infected are not aware they have the virus.

The Bay Area has the highest proportion of expectant mothers with hepatitis B. Infected new mothers have a 90% chance of passing hepatitis B to their children. If all mothers vaccinated newborns for hepatitis B, it would protect 95% of children from the virus. Early data from an Asian Liver Center study reveals **Bay Area obstetricians are still largely unaware of hepatitis B’s risks and dangers.**

THE SOLUTION: EDUCATION, SCREENING AND VACCINATION

Hepatitis B is a vaccine-preventable disease. The San Francisco Hep B Free campaign educates the public and healthcare providers about the health risks of the HPV virus, and provides free screenings and low-cost vaccinations at sites throughout the city and through special events such as the Asian Heritage Street Celebration. See <http://sfhepbfree.org/testing/sites> for a list of screening and vaccination sites.

CAMPAIGN GOAL

The goal of San Francisco Hep B Free is to make San Francisco a hepatitis B-free city by (1) creating public and healthcare provider awareness about the importance of testing and vaccinating APIs; (2) promoting routine HBV screenings and vaccinations within the primary care medical community; and (3) facilitating access to treatment for chronically infected individuals.

PARTICIPANTS

The San Francisco Hep B Free campaign is driven by a steering committee comprised of AsianWeek Foundation, San Francisco Department of Public Health and Asian Liver Center at Stanford University, and with Assemblywoman Fiona Ma, chronically infected with hepatitis B, serving as Honorary Chairperson. More than 150 community and healthcare groups support the campaign including the San Francisco Mayor’s Office.

CAMPAIGN MILESTONES

- The San Francisco Hep B Free campaign officially launched April 25, 2007
- Since its inception, the campaign has secured seven low cost public access HBV screening and vaccination sites, which have screened over 4,000 people and educated more than 450 clinicians
- Significant partnerships have been developed with over 50 public and private health care organizations, businesses, and educational institutions as well as the San Francisco Giants

MEDIA CONTACT

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