



# San Francisco Hep B Free

*First city in the U.S. to test and vaccinate all Asian and Pacific Islanders for hepatitis B*

## **DO YOU EVER MISS IMPORTANT DIAGNOSES?**

March 2008

Dear Colleague,

Chronic hepatitis B is alarmingly common among many ethnic groups, particularly your Asian, Pacific Islander and African patients. A simple blood test can easily identify these patients.

Due to the asymptomatic nature of chronic hepatitis B contracted early in life, many patients are unaware of their HBV status. Without access to the treatments that effectively manage chronic HBV infection they remain at risk for cirrhosis and liver cancer.

The *San Francisco Hep B Free* campaign has brought together an unprecedented number of public and private sectors working together to eliminate the transmission of hepatitis B.

We encourage you to utilize the attached “Flow Chart” as a guide for testing all of your at-risk patients. It serves as a reminder of which tests to order, how to interpret the tests, identify who to vaccinate and who to refer for a specialty opinion. The chart is durable enough to post on your wall for easy access

If you have questions you may call 415-554-2844 or email [hepinfo.dph@sfdph.org](mailto:hepinfo.dph@sfdph.org). Your questions will be promptly forwarded to one of our participating experts in the field.

Thank you for your attention. The SF Hep B Free Medical Protocol Group.

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### Just a few facts:

- Liver cancer is the greatest health disparity between Asian Pacific Islander and Caucasians.
- 34% of San Francisco’s population is of Asian descent.
- API men are 4 times more likely to die from liver cancer than Caucasian men.
- San Francisco has the highest rate of liver cancer in the nation.
- The hepatitis B vaccine is covered by most insurance policies.
- CDC recommends that anyone who wishes to be protected from HBV be vaccinated.