



Memorandum

Subject: Hepatitis B Vaccine Consent / Declination

Hepatitis B is the leading cause of liver cancer in the world. Hepatitis B virus (HBV) is a DNA virus that attacks specifically the liver and causes liver disease. Like HIV, HBV lives in and can be transmitted through body fluids such as blood, semen, and vaginal secretions.

HBV is 100 times more infectious than the AIDS virus. Yet, hepatitis B can be prevented with a safe and effective vaccine. For the 400 million people worldwide who are already chronic carriers of HBV, the vaccine is of no use. However, the future is much brighter for carriers with the current advances in drug development.

In the world, 1 out of 3 people have been infected with the Hepatitis B virus. In addition, The World Health Organization estimates that Hepatitis B infections lead to more than one million deaths every year. Within the United States, 1 out of 20 people have been infected with HBV and each year 200,000 new people will become infected with HBV. Furthermore, 5,000 people will die from hepatitis B and its complications every year and **approximately 2 health care workers are infected each day with HBV.**

As a health care worker, you are at a higher risk of contracting HBV because of the nature of your job. HBV is 100 times easier to transmit than HIV. In fact, your chances from being infected from a single contaminated needle stick for AIDS is 0.5 percent - for HBV your chance is 20 to 33 percent. **In the USA alone, while less than one health care worker is infected by HIV each year, 1,000 health care workers contract Hepatitis B each year.**

There is no cure for HBV, but there is a safe and effective vaccine. Every person in the health care field should be vaccinated against HBV. Hepatitis B is known as the "Silent Infection" because carriers of HBV may not become noticeably sick and may not realize they have the disease. Many people do not have symptoms when they are first infected. After an incubation period of anywhere from 40 to 140 days, about one-half of infected adults do experience some symptoms. Either way, whether they have symptoms or not, they can pass the virus onto others.

When a healthy adult is infected with the hepatitis B virus (HBV), his or her body can respond in several different ways. The usual signs and symptoms of HBV may include fever, fatigue, muscle or joint pain, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting. When infected with HBV, many people think they have the flu and do not attribute their symptoms to HBV infection.

The vaccine is given in a series of three injections. The first injection may be received at any time. The second one is given one month after the first. And the third injection is given six months after the first injection. The injection is given intramuscularly.

The common side effects that have been reported from the vaccine include soreness, swelling and redness at the injection site. You cannot get hepatitis B from the vaccine.

(This information is as of October 8th, 2001 from the website: www.hepb.org/info.html)

I, the undersigned, have read the above and understand the risks of HBV as a health care worker and the importance of the Hepatitis B vaccine.

(PLEASE INITIAL ONE OF THE FOLLOWING)

As a prospective employee of ProMed Agency:

_____ I have not yet received the three doses of the Hepatitis B vaccine and request the series to be administered to me free of charge.

_____ I have been given the opportunity to be vaccinated with the Hepatitis B vaccine free of charge but I presently **DECLINE** the Hepatitis B vaccine at this time.

_____ I understand that by declining this vaccine, I continue to be at risk of acquiring HBV.

_____ I have already had the series of the Hepatitis B vaccine. Year received: _____

_____ I have presented ProMed Agency with a copy of my Hepatitis B shot records.

Name

Signature

Date