



Preventing Perinatal Hepatitis B: Testing and Reporting Requirements July 2018

Up to 90% of infants born to hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) positive mothers can become chronically infected with hepatitis B infection. Timely post-exposure prophylaxis of infants born to HBsAg-positive women is very effective in preventing perinatal hepatitis B transmission. However, the Santa Barbara County Perinatal Hepatitis B Program continues to experience a delay or lack of reporting of HBsAg positive mothers with subsequent pregnancies. Therefore, we are providing the following guidelines for your reference as we rely on you as our partners to ensure the appropriate care for our new mothers and infants.

HBsAG Testing & Reporting Guidelines:

- **Providers are required to test pregnant women for HBsAg** (California Health and Safety Code, Section 125085). The HBsAg test should be ordered at an early prenatal visit with **every** pregnancy.
- **Re-test an HBsAg-negative woman before delivery** if she has clinical hepatitis or if she was at risk for hepatitis B exposure during pregnancy. Risk factors include recent intravenous drug use, an HBsAg-positive sex partner, more than one sex partner in the past 6 months, or recent treatment for an STD.
- **Test HBsAg-positive pregnant women for HBV DNA** (viral load). HBV DNA $\geq 20,000$ IU/mL is associated with an increased risk of perinatal transmission of hepatitis B virus. Immediately refer pregnant women with high viral loads ($>20,000$ IU/ml) to a specialist for evaluation and antiviral treatment.
- **Medical providers are required to report positive HBsAg results with each pregnancy** to the local health department via CalREDIE (California Code of Regulations, Section 125085, and Title 17, Section 2500 [b]).
- **Submit a copy of the laboratory report documenting the woman's HBsAg status to the birth hospital.** Notation of the woman's HBsAg status on the prenatal record is not sufficient because laboratory test results can be misinterpreted and because transcription errors can occur.
- **Refer** HBsAg-positive pregnant women to a specialist for medical management and counseling even if HBV DNA $<20,000$ IU/mL if she isn't already receiving such care.

Please contact our Immunization Program at (805) 346-8420 or visit our website at www.sbcphd.org/iz for any questions.