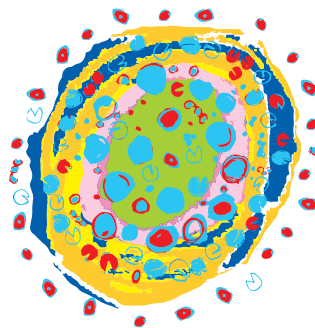


What can you do to stay well if you have chronic hep B?

- get a check up with the health service every 6 months
- a few people will get rid of the infection from their body over time; Medicine can also help by preventing long term medical problems like liver scarring or liver cancer caused by hep B. Results from blood tests can alert the doctors that a person might benefit from medication
- ask for some help to stop drinking grog and smoking, and with being a healthy weight
- tell your family, and ask them to help you stay healthy with your hep B

**You can look after
your liver, and
keep healthy
if you have hep B**



Cairns Liver Clinic
ph 4226 7224

Produced by:
**Cairns Public Health Unit,
Queensland Health.**

Contact:
Dr Annie Preston-Thomas
ph 4226 5555
Annie_Preston-Thomas@health.qld.gov.au

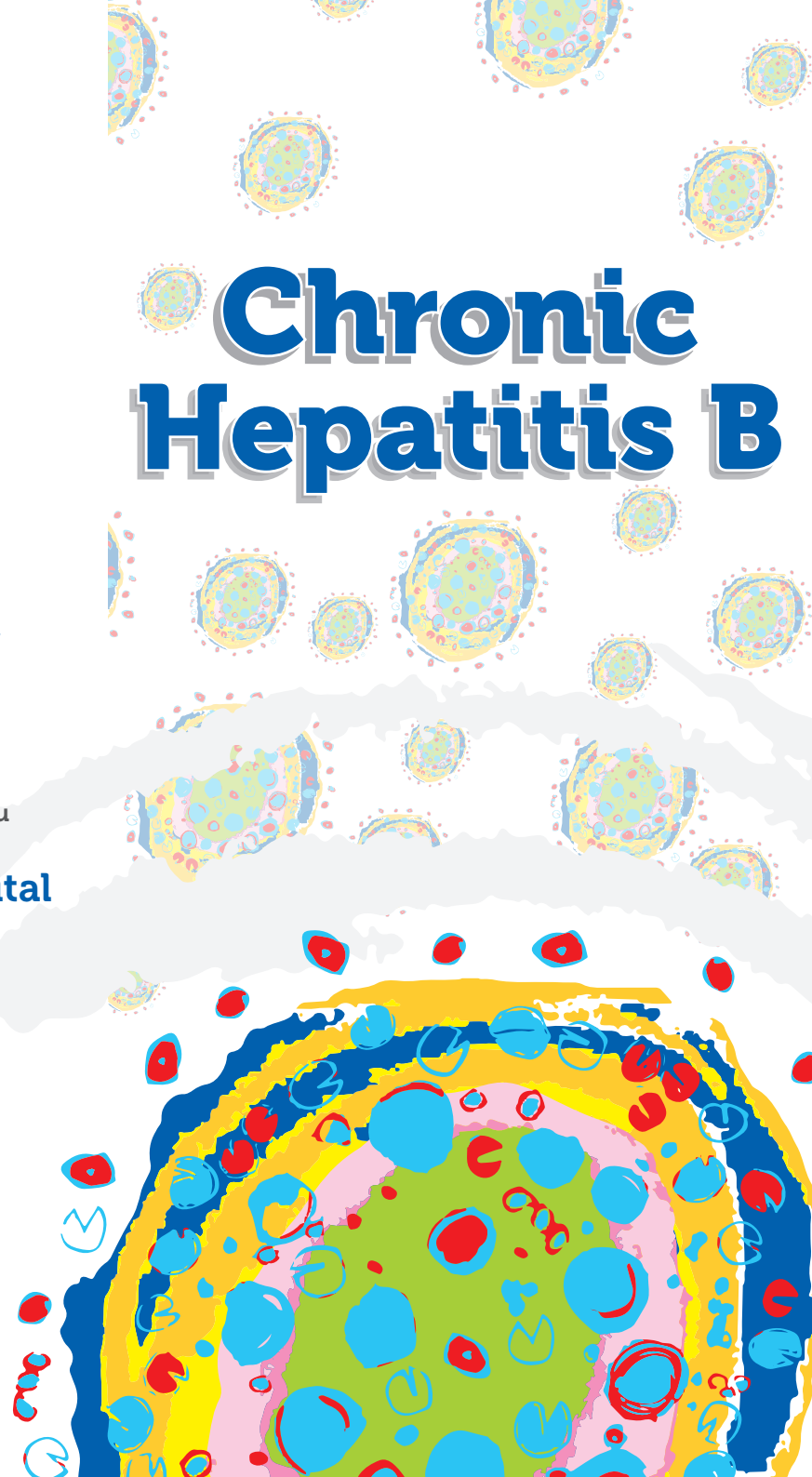
**Cairns and Hinterland Hospital
and Health Service.**

Contact:
Rhondda Lewis
(Viral Hepatitis Health Practitioner)
ph 4226 4761
Rhondda_Lewis@health.qld.gov.au

The logo: "this artwork is a story about 'Path Wadur' Good Health; in my language, Kokoberrin. Path Wadur for all of our people".

Shaun Edwards
Ma Wanjubung Pukun
Kokoberrin People, Staaten River
Cape York Peninsula

Chronic Hepatitis B



Hep B is a virus that can cause damage in the liver.

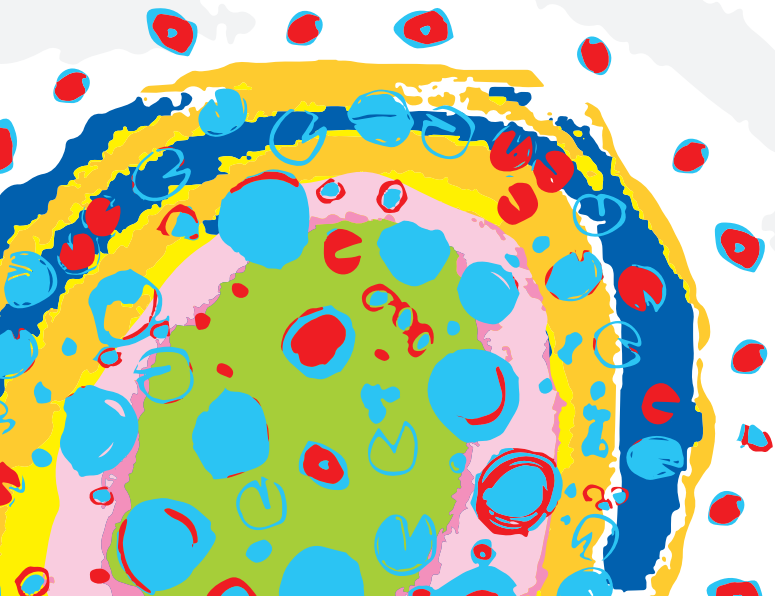
If you have hep B for a long time it is called chronic hep B

You can do things to keep your body strong and healthy

If you get hep B as a baby or a child - you usually have chronic hep B for life

If you get hep B as an adult, some people get sick with it, but it only becomes chronic hep B for one out of ten people (10%)

A blood test is the only way to know you have hep B



How do you catch it?

- babies can get hep B when they are born if their mother has hep B, or as a child from other people with hep B (maybe from skin sores)
- as an adult from having unprotected sex with someone who has hep B
- from infected blood mixing with another person's blood - from cuts or unsterile tattooing equipment, sharing razors or toothbrushes, or when sharing injecting equipment.

What does the liver do?

- remove poisons from the body
- help the body to absorb food

You can't survive if your liver stops working.

How does the hep B virus make you sick?

- the hep B virus can be in your blood and your liver for a long time not causing any problems
- your body's immune system can start to fight the hep B virus if your body starts to fight the virus, it can cause damage to your liver.
- lots of people feel well, even when the virus is causing some damage. That's why it's important to have blood tests each year if you have chronic hep B
- some people feel sick, tired, no appetite, sore in the place where the liver is (on the right side just below the ribs) or joint pains. Other symptoms can be fever, your skin and eyes turn yellow (jaundice) or dark urine. Some people with hep B get cancer growing in the liver.

How can we protect babies and little kids from it?

- mothers with hep B can be put on treatment during pregnancy to help prevent the baby getting hep B
- all babies get the course of 3 hep B needles to protect them
- an extra needle is given to the baby at birth if the mother has chronic hep B
- for mothers with hep B, it is safe to breast feed, but if the nipples are cracked or bleeding they should stop breast-feeding until they heal
- babies born to mothers with chronic hep B need to have a blood test at 9-12 months old to make sure the vaccination worked and they are protected against hep B

How else can we stop it being spread?

Reduce the risk of passing it to other people:

- cover cuts and sores
- don't share razors or toothbrushes
- have safe sex – use condoms and lube
- people you have sex with should be vaccinated against hep B
- don't share tattoo and piercing tools or ink
- don't share injecting equipment
- if you are pregnant talk to your doctor about ways to prevent your baby from being infected
- all family members should have a test for hep B and have hep B vaccination if they're not already immune.