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NFID initiative working to up hepatitis B vaccination rates

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(HealthDay)—A new initiative to increase hepatitis B virus vaccination

rates among at-risk adults has been developed, according to a report from the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) published in support of World Hepatitis Day.

The NFID is developing a new initiative to increase hepatitis B vaccination rates among at-risk adults in order to reduce the burden of hepatitis B infection in the United States. Although childhood immunization rates are high, adult immunization rates have remained stable at around 25 percent.

In 2016, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that there were 21,000 new hepatitis B infections, with an increase in cases after years of decreasing infection rates. The main ways that hepatitis B is transmitted are by sharing needles and sexual contact with infected individuals. Anyone who wants to be protected from hepatitis B should be vaccinated, with vaccination recommended for those at increased risk. The NFID initiative aims to educate health care professionals and consumers regarding the risks and prevention of hepatitis B. A multidisciplinary roundtable was held in June to engage stakeholders, including health care professionals, advocacy groups, and professional societies.

"NFID is urging all health care professionals to identify patients at high risk, to be familiar with the current vaccine recommendations, and to incorporate them into their practices," William Schaffner, M.D., NFID Medical Director, said in a statement.

2018 World Hepatitis Day is Saturday, July 28.

More information: More Information
World Hepatitis Day

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