Hepatitis B vaccination: A completed schedule... Enough to control HBV lifelong?
The Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board

19 years of support to the control and prevention of viral hepatitis in Europe.
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Mission Statement

The objective of VHPB is to contribute to the control and prevention of viral hepatitides:
- by drawing the attention to this important public health problem
- by issuing prevention guidance and catalyse the development of recommendations, and
- by encouraging actions to improve control and prevention.

VHPB target audiences are, in the first instance, health care professionals, policymakers, and opinion leaders in Europe.
History

- VHPB was established in 1992. First actions related to hepatitis B as an occupational risk.
- World Health Assembly (1992): Integration of hepatitis B vaccine into national vaccination programmes.
- In 1993, VHPB started a second major initiative and focused on hepatitis B as a community health risk.
- The geographical focus was initially Western Europe, its actions were extended to include all 53 countries in the WHO/EURO, contact are being made with other WHO regions.
Support and Grants

- supported by
  - unrestricted grants from the vaccine industry GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals, Sanofi Pasteur MSD, Sanofi Pasteur and Merck
  - several universities and other institutions in Europe
  - GAVI fund, CVP at PATH, Unicef, CDC, WHO in the past for its activities in CEE and NIS.

![Pie chart showing support sources.](chart.png)
Support and Grants

• strict operational and scientific independence is essential
  – VHPB advisers and invited experts get only travel and subsistence reimbursed
  – according to the University Rules
  – no honorary or other forms of remuneration
VHPB Structure

- **VHPB advisory board** is composed of independent experts in the field of viral hepatitis

- Honorary members

- Executive secretariat based at the VAXINFECTIO unit of the University of Antwerp
  - Emmy Engelen
  - Greet Hendrickx
  - Alex Vorsters
  - Pierre Van Damme
## Composition of the advisors board

### VHPB Advisors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>Academic/University</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nedret Emiroğlu</td>
<td>WHO Regional Office for Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steven Wiersma</td>
<td>WHO Headquarters</td>
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<td>Marita Van de Laar</td>
<td>ECDC, Sweden</td>
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<td><strong>ECDC</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CDC</strong></td>
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<td>John Ward</td>
<td>CDC, USA</td>
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<td><strong>ELPA (European Liver Patient Association)</strong></td>
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<td>Tatjana Reic</td>
<td>European Liver Patient Association (ELPA)</td>
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<td><strong>Public Health Institute</strong></td>
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<td>Hans Blystad</td>
<td>Norway</td>
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<td>David Goldberg</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mira Kojouharova</td>
<td>Sofia, Bulgaria</td>
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<td>Johannes Hallauer</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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These honorary members are elected for a lifelong term and are invited to VHPB meetings on an ad hoc basis.
VHPB ACTIVITIES
2-3 meetings/year
(technical - country)
Publications

Viral hepatitis

- 2 issues/Year
- Distributed:
  - Pdf on website
  - Mailing to ± 3600 readers
Has the time come to control hepatitis A globally? Matching prevention to the changing epidemiology

G. Hendrickx,1 K. Van Herck,1,2 A. Vuytsen,1 S. Wiersma,3 C. Shapiro,4 J. K. Andrus,5 A. M. Roper,6 D. Shouval,6 W. Ward4 and P. Van Damme1
1Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA, USA; 2National Institute of Public Health and the Environment, Bilthoven, the Netherlands; 3Centre for the Evaluation of Vaccinations, Vaccine & Infectious Disease Institute, World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases, Faculty of Medicine, University of Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium; 4Division of Viral Hepatitis, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA, USA; 5Department of Immunization, Vaccines & Biologicals, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland; 6Per American Health Organization, Washington, DC, USA; and 7Liver Unit, Makkovik/Naluq, University Hospital, Jerusalem, Israel

SUMMARY. For the first time a global meeting on hepatitis A virus (HAV) infection as vaccine preventable disease was organized at the end of 2007. More than 200 experts from 46 countries gathered to investigate the changing global HAV epidemiology reflecting the increasing numbers of persons at risk for severe clinical disease and mortality from HAV infection. The benefits of childhood and adult hepatitis A (HepA) vaccination strategies and the data needed by individual countries and international health organizations to assess current HepA prevention strategies were discussed. New approaches in preventing HAV infection including universal HepA vaccination were considered. This introductory paper summarizes the main findings of the meeting and describes the changing epidemiology of HAV infections and the impact of HepA vaccination strategies in various countries. Implementation of HepA vaccination strategies should take into account the level of endemicity, the level of the socio-economic development and sanitation, and the risk of outbreaks. A stepwise strategy for introduction of HepA universal immunization of children was recommended. This strategy should be based on accurate surveillance of cases and qualitative documentation of outbreaks and their control, secure political support on the basis of high-quality results, and comprehensive cost-effectiveness studies. The recognition of the need for increased global attention towards HepA prevention is an important outcome of this meeting.

Keywords: Global hepatitis A meeting; hepatitis A; hepatitis A vaccination; infectious disease control; public health; surveillance.

3 – 4 peer reviewed publications/year
Web site www.vhpbo.org

• Web site
  – Overview of the VHPB
  – Shows all previous recommendations, guidelines and consensus statements
  – All *Viral Hepatitis* issues as of 1996 can be downloaded
  – Presentations of VHPB meetings are on-line since 2001 (>449 presentations of in total >560 documents)
  – Formally approved by WHO Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety
VHPB news

VHPB endorses the first official World Hepatitis Day (28 July) of the World Health Organization (WHO).

In May 2010 the World Health Assembly adopted the viral hepatitis resolution WHA 63.18, calling for an official WHO sponsored World Hepatitis Day. From now on this WHO sponsored World Hepatitis Day will take place Thursday 28th of July, Professor Baruch Blumberg’s birthday. This date is very appropriate to put viral hepatitis in the spotlight as Professor Blumberg received in 1972 a chaired Nobel Prize for his research leading to the discovery of the hepatitis B virus and allowing the development of the hepatitis B vaccine.

The World Hepatitis Day provides the opportunity to increase the awareness, understanding and prevention of viral hepatitis and its related diseases in all WHO member states. With more than 20 years’ experience in increasing awareness of viral hepatitis among healthcare workers, policymakers and opinion leaders, the VHPB recognizes the importance and relevance of this initiative and fully supports the overall objectives of the World Hepatitis Day. We hope that the campaign “Hepatitis affects everyone, everywhere. Know it. Confront it. Protect yourself.” will have a major global impact on the general awareness of Viral Hepatitis.

More information and promotional material in different languages is accessible on www.worldhepatitisday.info
Involvement in other meetings

- ECDC Technical Expert group
- ETAGE (European Technical Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization)
- SAGE (Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization)
- Input in the scientific content of the “Summit Conference 2010 Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C” in Brussels, 14-15 October 2010 (http://hepsummit2010.org/)
- Other scientific meetings
VHPB History

• Since 1992, 19 years of experience
• 37 issues of Viral Hepatitis
• Meetings: 37 VHPB meetings, 3 EE/NIS meetings, 1 global HAV meeting
• Peer reviewed publications: more than 80
Hepatitis B vaccination: A completed schedule...Enough to control HBV lifelong?

Milan, Italy
November 17-18, 2011
Objectives of the meeting

• To review long-term efficacy of hepatitis B vaccine and field effectiveness of hepatitis B vaccination programmes
• To review recent data on immune memory induced by hepatitis B vaccine and the anamnestic response after a booster dose
• To examine the occurrence and impact of breakthrough infections
• To review data on potential impact of HBV mutants.
• To evaluate current hepatitis B booster vaccination recommendations
• To evaluate the role of adjuvants in long-term protection.
• To discuss current used definitions, standards and terminology.