
Conclusion: Hepatitis B immunization confers immunologic memory and clinical protection for at least 10 years in health care workers in an endemic country. They do not need a booster, nor measurement of their antibody levels; nor by analogy do travelers.

Abstract: ... Present data indicate that antibody levels fall over 10 years but that clinical protection against disease lasts for more than 15 years, even in the presence of undetectable antibody levels ...

(Nearly) all individuals previously immunized against HB will respond in an anamnestic fashion (within 10 to 14 days) to a booster dose of HB vaccine, irrespective of their antibody concentration, and all will respond within 1 month ... This antibody response to HB infection should be protective ... The study lends weight to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the European Consensus Group on Hepatitis B Immunity that persons responding to a complete immunization series as adults do not need a booster.

Commentary: The question is, do previously immunized health care workers, or travelers, need a booster for hepatitis B ... when their concentration of antibody drops below 10mIU/ml, which is considered to confer protection? ... The accumulated data therefore indicate that it is not necessary to measure antibody concentrations in those successfully immunized within the previous 10 years, nor is it necessary to boost routinely ... Practitioners in travel medicine should resist the temptation to test or boost "just in case."

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