



July 2011

Community and Health Services Department



Recombivax HB[®] and Engerix[®]-B Vaccine

(Hepatitis B Vaccine)

Recombivax HB[®] and Engerix[®]-B are vaccines that protect against hepatitis B

- Grade seven students are immunized with two doses of vaccine
- All other recipients are immunized with three doses of vaccine
- Both the two-dose and three-dose schedule provide full protection
- The vaccine is given as an injection in the upper arm
- Both vaccines work equally well

Mild side effects may occur, such as:

- Redness, swelling or discomfort at the injection site
 - Headache, dizziness, fever, a feeling of being unwell, nausea
- Severe side effects are rare.

People should delay or avoid this immunization if they:

- Have a fever or are fighting an infection, unless it is a simple cold, or other minor illness
- Have an allergy to yeast, thimerosal, aluminum, or latex
- Are pregnant

Hepatitis B

- Affects the liver, and can cause permanent liver damage, cancer and death
- Most people recover from hepatitis B, but about 10% of infected people will become carriers of the virus for life, and they can continue to infect others
- About half of people who become infected with hepatitis B do not develop symptoms
- Others will experience acute illness, fatigue, fever, loss of appetite or jaundice (yellow skin and eyes)
- The virus spreads from person to person by infected blood or body fluids, through sexual contact, sharing needles, body piercing or tattooing equipment
- Can also be passed by an infected mother to her child at birth

For further information, please call:

York Region Health Connection 1-800-361-5653

TTY 1-866-252-9933 or visit www.york.ca

Information sheet