

IMMUNE SYSTEM

HIV and Hepatitis Vaccines

THERE are two types of vaccines:

- **A therapeutic vaccine** will fight off an existing infection. Therapeutic vaccines work by tricking the immune system into fighting an existing infection
- **A protective vaccine** given to prevent an infection.

A protective vaccine stimulates the body's immune system to produce proteins called antibodies to fight off a future infection. For instance, the hepatitis A (HAV) and hepatitis B (HBV) vaccine will protect most people from becoming infected with HAV and HBV in the future—that is if they are not already infected and they take all the shots. In fact, people with HIV/HCV coinfection should be vaccinated against HAV and HBV if not already protected. There are additional vaccines that are recommended for people with HIV—talk to your doctor or nurse about which vaccines are needed.

There are currently no vaccines to treat or protect against HIV or HCV. The problem with developing vaccines for HIV and HCV is that both viruses are constantly changing (mutating), which makes it difficult to find a vaccine. There has been much research on HIV and HCV vaccines, but so far no one has been successful. However, most scientists believe that therapeutic and protective vaccines will be developed at some time in the future.

Check this out:

- Talk to your doctor or nurse about the vaccines you need if you have HIV or HCV
- The vaccines are safe and effective
- There are no vaccines to protect against HIV or HCV
- Make sure that all doses of a vaccine are taken
- If you have HIV and HCV you should be vaccinated against HAV and HBV
- If you have HIV talk to your doctor or nurse about the vaccines you should have

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Being Well*



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