

# HEPATITIS A & HEPATITIS B: THE ONLY VACCINE-PREVENTABLE STDs

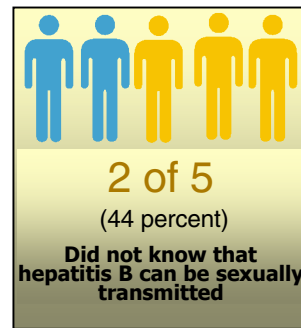
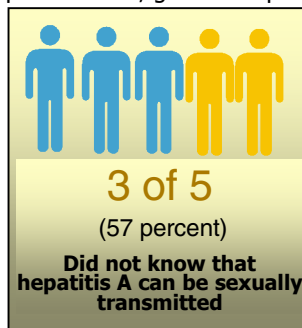
## Fact Sheet on Survey Findings

### Background:

For 2004 Sexually Transmitted Diseases Awareness Month (April), the American Social Health Association (ASHA) unveiled a new survey\* assessing Americans' sexual attitudes, behaviors and knowledge of STDs. ASHA is an organization dedicated to preventing STDs and their harmful consequences. One in every four Americans will contract an STD sometime in their lifetime. In 2000 alone, there were more than 18.9 million new infections.

### Results:

- Knowledge of viral hepatitis among those surveyed ranked lowest when compared to other common STDs such as HIV, chlamydia, humanpapilloma virus, genital herpes and gonorrhea.



- Hepatitis A virus can be spread during oral-anal sex. About one-quarter of hepatitis A cases can be attributed to household (sharing living quarters with an infected person) or sexual contact.
- Hepatitis B can be spread during sex via direct or indirect contact with infected blood or body fluids such as semen and vaginal secretions, accounting for over half (54 percent) of all hepatitis B infections.
- Together, hepatitis A and hepatitis B, sometimes referred to as vaccine-preventable hepatitis (VPH), cause more than 170,000 infections and more than 5,000 deaths each year in the U.S.
- Many people did not know that they could protect themselves from hepatitis A and hepatitis B through immunization (55 and 42 percent, respectively). Hepatitis A and hepatitis B are the only STDs that can be prevented via vaccination. It is important to note that hepatitis C, which can also be sexually transmitted, cannot be prevented via vaccination.
- Over half of those surveyed (60 percent) had not been vaccinated or were unsure whether they have been vaccinated against hepatitis A and hepatitis B.
- Almost 90 percent of respondents said their healthcare provider had not recommended hepatitis vaccination, yet 2 out of 3 respondents had some risk for infection.
- Nearly one out of three people (28 percent) did not realize that someone can have VPH and not know it.
- Approximately 50 percent of hepatitis B infections show no symptoms.
- Among older children and adults, approximately 30 percent of infections do not result in jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin)—which is the only visible symptom of viral hepatitis.

For more information, please visit [www.ASHASTD.org](http://www.ASHASTD.org) and click on



\*This survey was conducted among 1,150 U.S. adults aged 18-35 years by Harris Interactive between March 3-8, 2004.