Task Force Reaffirms Recommendation for Hep B Screening During Pregnancy

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force gave the recommendation an A rating, meaning screening must be covered with no cost sharing.

July 30, 2019 By Benjamin Ryan

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) has reaffirmed its 2009 recommendation that all pregnant women should receive hepatitis B virus (HBV) screening. The task force gave this recommendation an A rating, which under the Affordable Care Act (ACA, or Obamacare) means that insurers must cover the screening for pregnant women—and with no cost sharing. (The ACA requires private insurers to cover preventive services with a grade of B or better.)

HBV is a virus carried through the blood that can be transmitted from mother to child during pregnancy or delivery. People who contract hep B during infancy or childhood are more likely to develop a chronic infection, which raises the risk of long-term illness and death as a result of cirrhosis and liver cancer.

The test for hep B, the USPSTF previously found, is highly accurate at identifying the infection.

The task force reviewed a nationally representative sample and found that between 1998 and 2011, there were 85.8 HBV diagnoses among mothers per 100,000 deliveries. This means that during this period, 0.09% of all live single-born infants were born to mothers who had the virus.

Rates of maternal HBV vaccination have increased by an average of 5.5% annually since 1998.

The task force analyzed various forms of evidence, including observational studies of U.S. case management programs, and found that interventions are effective at preventing mother-to-child transmission of HBV. Their analysis found evidence suggesting that such transmission has decreased over time among women and infants who have received case management and that this had yielded an overall health benefit to such individuals.

To read the recommendation click here.

To read a press release about the recommendation, click here.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/article/task-force-reaffirms-recommendation-hep-b-screening-pregnancy