



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES
DIVISION OF EPIDEMIOLOGY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH
PO BOX 369
TRENTON, N.J. 08625-0369

JON S. CORZINE
Governor

www.nj.gov/health

HEATHER HOWARD
Commissioner

August 12, 2009

Dear Health Care Provider,

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (NJDHSS), in collaboration with the Ocean County Health Department (OCHD), continues to investigate an outbreak of acute hepatitis B involving patients who received care at a private office-based practice which provides hematology/oncology services in Toms River, NJ. During the investigation infection control issues were identified, which may have put patients at risk of acquiring hepatitis B, and possibly other bloodborne pathogens.

Based on findings from this ongoing investigation, public health officials are recommending that patients seen at the office locations of this practice be tested for several bloodborne pathogens. As you know, patients with hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus and HIV virus infections may be asymptomatic or may have experienced mild illness for which they never sought medical care. As a result, NJDHSS and OCHD, in consultation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, feel it is in the best interest of public health to recommend testing.

Letters are being mailed to patients recommending that they be tested for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV. Please be advised that you may be contacted by your patients who may have received care at the medical offices of Dr. Parvez Dara in Ocean County.

If a patient presents to you for testing or you determine that your patient should be tested, the following laboratory tests should be ordered:

Table with 4 columns: Test Name, Description, Synonyms, Reflex Testing for Positives. Rows include HBsAg, HBcAb (total) and HBcAb IgM, HCV Ab, and HIV 1/2.

Additional testing (e.g., additional serology for hepatitis B and/or confirmatory testing for hepatitis C) should be performed as clinically appropriate.

The following ICD-9 codes should be included on the prescription:

- Hepatitis B - V02.61
Hepatitis C - V02.62
HIV - V01.79

Patients should be directed to the laboratory where they routinely receive services.

Please remember that healthcare providers must report diagnosed cases of hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV to the appropriate public health agency. Information about reporting can be obtained on the NJDHSS web site at <http://nj.gov/health/cd/techinfo.htm>.

Ocean County Health Department (OCHD) is taking phone calls from patients who have questions or concerns about their potential exposure. These individuals may call 732-341-9700 ext. 7502, Monday through Friday, 8AM – 5PM. Patients may also visit the OCHD website for information at <http://ochd.org>. NJDHSS is available for public health and healthcare professionals with questions related to this outbreak. They should call 609-588-7500, Monday through Friday, 8AM – 5PM.

Sincerely,



Christina Tan, MD, MPH
State Epidemiologist/Assistant Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services

cc: Ella Boyd, VMD, Public Health Coordinator-OCHD