

**Nephrology Department**

**Hepatitis B vaccination (Fendrix®)**

**Patient Information**

**Contact Information**

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 (Available Monday – Friday, 8:30am until 2pm)

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**What is Hepatitis B?**Hepatitis B is a virus, which can be life threatening. It is spread through contact with bodily fluids. Hepatitis B affects the liver and can lead to serious problems such as cirrhosis and liver cancer. The virus can stay in the body of some patients for their whole life, which means it can be passed on to other people.

**Why might I be at risk?**

There is the potential that patients with a kidney problem might require dialysis at some point in their lives. When on dialysis treatment, patients might be exposed to blood and other bodily fluids. They are therefore at an increased risk of coming into contact with Hepatitis B.

**How can I be protected?**

Receiving a Hepatitis B vaccination helps you to build your own protection against the virus. The vaccination encourages your body to make antibodies which will help you to fight the virus if it enters your blood stream.

**How is the vaccination given?**

The Hepatitis B vaccination given to renal patients is called Fendrix®. You will require four injections, usually given in the upper arm. The timing of the injections should be as follows:

1st injection –when you make your appointment for your first injection

 2nd injection – one month after the first injection

 3rd injection – two months after the first injection

 4th injection – six months after the first injection

It is a good idea for you to keep track of your injection dates to ensure you receive them on time. Approximately eight weeks after you have received your fourth injection you will require a blood test, this is to check you have a sufficient amount of antibodies.

Because people with kidney problems find it more difficult to produce antibodies, you may require further booster injections. You will be advised by your renal team if this is the case.

**Will I need to be monitored or have tests when I am receiving Fendrix® injections?**

Approximately eight weeks after you complete your course of Fendrix® you will require a blood test to ensure that you have built a good level of immunity to the Hepatitis B virus. Once the result of this test is available, your doctor or specialist nurse will let you know the result and tell you if you require any further injections or booster doses in the future.

**Does the vaccination have side effects?**

As with all medications and vaccines it is possible that you might suffer from side effects. The following are some of the more common side effects:

* Headache
* Tiredness
* Pain and / or discomfort of the injection site
* Redness and / or swelling of the injection site
* A high temperature
* Stomach ache

If concerned speak with your nurse or doctor.

**Special cautions when having Fendrix® injections**

If you have ever suffered from an allergic reaction to a vaccine you should tell your doctor or specialist nurse before you have your first injection of Fendrix®.

If you have had or have an infection within a few days of your appointment for any of the 4 doses of Fendrix® you must postpone the injection until you are fully recovered. You may discuss this with your doctor or Practice Nurse.

If you have received other immunisations or expect to do so soon you should avoid starting Fendrix® until 2-3 weeks after you have completed these other immunisations.

**How do I arrange my Fendrix® injections?**Your renal specialist nurse will write to your GP to let them know that you require a course of Fendrix® injections to immunise you against hepatitis B. You will also receive a letter so that you know you need to book an appointment with your practice nurse for your first injection. We normally recommend that you contact your GP surgery for your appointment two weeks after you receive your letter, this allows the extra time needed for our letter to arrive at your GP surgery and the injections to be ordered.

**Further information**

Further information about your medication can be found in the patient information leaflet found in the injection box or on the container.