

The following table is a summary of some important serologic markers that occur during acute and chronic HBV infection. The corresponding graphs illustrate how these serologic markers appear, disappear, or persist during acute or chronic HBV infection.

| Serologic Markers in Acute and Chronic Hepatitis B Virus Infection | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Marker | Acute | Chronic | Indication |
| HBsAg (hepatitis B surface antigen) | identified in serum 30 to 60 days after exposure to HBV peaks when symptoms appear disappears when symptoms abate | can be identified in blood | person is infectious |
| HBeAg (hepatitis B e antigen) | confirmed the same time as HBsAg | is positive early in infection is more likely to be negative after longer infection | viral replication high infectivity |
| IgM anti-HBc (IgM class antibody to hepatitis B core antigen [HBcAg]) | confirmed 2 months after exposure to HBV present in high titers disappears 3 to 6 months later | disappears 6 months after exposure to HBV | acute or recent infection |
| Anti-HBc (antibody to HBcAg) | initially consists of IgM antibody after 6 months, consists of IgG persists indefinitely | persists indefinitely | earlier infection at some unspecified time |
| Anti-HBs (antibody to HBsAg) | appears last, usually 6 to 8 months after exposure lasts indefinitely | does not develop | immunity to HBV, either from past infection or in response to vaccine |