

Headline **Beware spread of Hepatitis B, says Liow**  
Date **28 Jul 2011**  
MediaTitle **The Star**  
Section **Nation**  
Journalist **N/A**  
Frequency **Daily**  
Circ / Read **304,904 / 1,026,812**

Language **English**  
Page No **18**  
Article Size **101 cm<sup>2</sup>**  
Color **Black/white**  
ADValue **1,834**  
PRValue **5,502**



## Beware spread of Hepatitis B, says Liow

**PETALING JAYA:** Hepatitis B, an infectious virus which attacks the liver, is 50 to 100 times easier to spread than HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

Liver cancer, which can begin from an inflamed liver caused by the hepatitis virus, is also among the top cancers. It is more common among men, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai.

"One in 12 people worldwide has chronic Hepatitis B or C infection without realising it until complications set in.

"This is very risky as the person may unknowingly transmit the virus to others," Liow wrote in his blog yesterday.

Hepatitis B can be transmitted, among others, through sexual contact and saliva, while Hepatitis C can be spread via blood transfusions and sharing of needles or syringes.

This means that the viruses can spread through the sharing of toothbrushes or shavers and at birth from an infected mother to the newborn, said Liow.

If left unchecked, the viruses can destroy the liver and cause cirrhosis and may become cancerous.

Up to 80% of liver cancer patients were known to seek treatment only at the advanced stage, he said in his blog.

Liow urged all Malaysian adults to undergo tests and obtain vaccinations for Hepatitis B at private health institutions.

"The Ministry ensures that every baby born in Malaysia obtains the Hepatitis B vaccination under its mandatory immunisation programme," he said.

World Hepatitis Day is commemorated today.