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Hepatitis B serologies

Patient has hepatitis symptoms:

Check surface antigen:

If positive, pt. has either an acute or chronic infection (an active infection)

To distinguish acute/chronic, check core antibody (surface antibody will be negative)

If it's core IgM, it's acute infection; if it's core IgG, it's chronic infection

If no surface antigen, check core IgM (may be the only thing positive in window period)

Patient does not have hepatitis symptoms, but you want to know if they have immunity:

Check surface IgG:

If positive, pt. could be vaccinated or has had an infection

To distinguish, check core IgG; if positive, patient has had an infection

*if a person does not have surface IgG, they do not have immunity to Hep B