How long does the protection last for my baby?
There is good evidence to show that babies who have been fully immunised against hepatitis B will have long-lasting protection.

Are there any side effects to the vaccine?
The birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine is very well tolerated by newborn babies and does not interfere with breast feeding. Serious side effects are very rare.
If you are concerned talk to your midwife, doctor or immunisation provider.

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (CDC) Hepatitis B Questions and Answers for the Public: https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hbv/bfaq.htm

Hepatitis Australia; https://www.hepatitisaustralia.com/Pages/Category/hepatitis-b

For more information
SA Health
PO Box 6 Rundle Mall
Adelaide SA 5000
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation

Public, I1, A1
Why do all newborns need the hepatitis B vaccine before they leave hospital?

In Australia all newborn babies are recommended to have hepatitis B vaccine, preferably within 24 hours of birth.

This timing provides the best protection for all babies, including those who may have contracted the virus from the mother during birth. The birth dose also helps protect babies from hepatitis B virus until they are old enough to receive hepatitis B vaccine with the routine childhood immunisations at six weeks of age.

What if my baby does not receive the birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine?

If the vaccine is not given within 24 hours of birth, it can still be given up to 7 days of age.

If your baby did not have the birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine in the first 7 days, they should commence their routine childhood immunisations at six weeks of age to provide protection as early as possible.

How many doses of the hepatitis B vaccine does my baby need?

With your consent, your baby will receive one dose of hepatitis B vaccine, preferably within 24 hours of birth.

Your baby should then receive three more doses of hepatitis B vaccine in a combination vaccine at six weeks, four and six months of age as part of their childhood immunisation schedule.

Premature babies born less than 32 weeks gestation or weighing less than 2000 grams at birth will need an extra dose at 12 months of age. Ask your doctor or nurse if you think your baby will need an extra dose of hepatitis B vaccine.