

What do I do if a friend or family member is sick?

If you, your friend, or a family member becomes sick, immediately go see a health care provider.

- **Get tested**

The health care provider will also be able to help you decide if you need go to the hospital.

If your test is positive, the local health department will talk with you about how you may have been exposed to hepatitis A.

The local health department will also need to know who has been in close contact with you to offer them vaccination or an immune boost for protection.



More information on hepatitis A

Call your health care provider, your local health department, or go to:

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)

www.mi.gov/hepatitisAoutbreak

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

www.cdc.gov/hepatitis

Help stop the spread of hepatitis A in Michigan



For information on where to get vaccinated.

GCHD McCree Building
630 S. Saginaw St., Suite 4
Flint, Michigan 48502-1540
Hotline: 810-257-3048

For additional local health department information, contact the MDHHS, Division of Immunization.
Phone: 517-335-8159

GCHD Burton Health Clinic
Immunization Clinic
G-3373 S. Saginaw St.
Burton, Michigan 48529



**Genesee County
Health Department**
Your Health. Our Work.

Don't wait!

If you or a loved one have a history of substance abuse, please reach out to a health care provider to discuss your risk for hepatitis A and how you can prevent the disease.



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Protect yourself
Protect others
Get vaccinated

What is happening in Michigan?

There is a large outbreak of hepatitis A virus in our communities. Since August 1, 2016, more than 485 people have been sick with hepatitis A and 19 people have died. The majority of people sick with hepatitis A live in Southeast Michigan, but recently hepatitis A has spread outside of this area to other parts of our state. Many people in the current outbreak are at risk for a more serious illness, with nearly 9 out of every 10 people hospitalized after getting sick.

People have become sick after:

- injecting drugs or using street drugs (including pain killers)
- close contact with someone who has hepatitis A
- going to jail
- paying for sex or trading sex for money
- eating food prepared by people who were sick

We need your help to stop the spread of this infection. For the most recent hepatitis A outbreak information, visit:

www.mi.gov/hepatitisAoutbreak

Please read this brochure, share this info with your friends and family, and get vaccinated!

Hepatitis A virus harms the liver. The liver is the organ in the body that sits under your right rib cage.

- People who already have chronic liver disease are at a higher risk of a serious case of hepatitis A.

What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is an easily spread virus that causes liver swelling and damage.

The hepatitis A virus affects people in different ways:

- People usually start to feel badly 2 to 6 weeks after they get the infection
- Some people can have a mild illness lasting for several weeks
- Other people can become very sick for many months and a few may die of liver failure

Symptoms of hepatitis A include:

- nausea and vomiting
- pain in the abdomen (belly)
- feeling tired
- fever
- loss of appetite
- yellow eyes and skin, called jaundice (See photo below)
- dark urine (often brown in color)
- pale-colored stools (poop)
- joint pain



How is it spread? Who is at higher risk?

A person can get hepatitis A when they eat, drink, or touch their mouth with food, liquid or objects (including their hands) that have come into contact with stool (poop) from an infected person.

People who are more likely to get hepatitis A are those who:

- Share injection and non-injection street drugs (including pain killers)
- Have sexual activities with someone who has hepatitis A
- Have close contact, care for, or live with someone who has hepatitis A
- Are men who have sex with men

Can hepatitis A be prevented?

Yes, hepatitis A can be prevented!

The best way to prevent hepatitis A is to get vaccinated:

- **2 shots, given 6 months apart**



Image courtesy of the Public Health Image Library.
Photo Credit: James Gathany

The other way to prevent the spread of infection is to wash hands with soap and water:

- after using the bathroom
- after sexual activities
- before handling food



There is no medication to treat hepatitis A, so prevention through vaccination is the best approach.

What is the hepatitis A vaccine?

The hepatitis A vaccine is given as a set of shots, usually in the arm. The shots trigger your immune system to make antibodies, which protect you against the virus.

- **If you get both shots 6 months apart, you will be better protected!**
- **All persons who want to be safe from the hepatitis A virus may be vaccinated!**

If you, or someone you know, don't have health insurance, you will likely qualify for free or low cost vaccines. Talk with your local health department to find out if you qualify.

If you know you have been exposed to hepatitis A, get the vaccine within 2 weeks for the best protection.