

Can hepatitis A be prevented?

Yes, hepatitis A can be prevented!

The best protection is to get vaccinated.
The vaccine is safe and highly effective.



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 diaper changes
- before handling food

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



More information on hepatitis A

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

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)

mi.gov/HepatitisAOutbreak

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

cdc.gov/hepatitis

Talk with local public health

If you, or someone you know, do not have health insurance, you will likely qualify for free or low cost vaccines. Speak with your local health department to find out if you qualify.

For local health department information, call the MDHHS Division of Immunization at 517-335-8159.

Local health department information is also available on the Michigan Association for Local Public Health website, visit: <https://malph.org/directory>



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Help stop the spread of hepatitis A in Michigan



Protect yourself
Protect others
Get vaccinated



What is happening in Michigan?

Since August 1, 2016, there has been a large outbreak of hepatitis A virus. More than 600 people have been sick in 2017 alone.

While many people sick with hepatitis A live in Southeast Michigan, hepatitis A has spread to other parts of our state. People have become very sick with hepatitis A, have been admitted to the hospital, and some have died.

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

mi.gov/HepatitisAOutbreak

What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a serious liver disease caused by a virus. The virus is found in the feces (poop) of infected people.

If a person is infected with hepatitis A virus, it spreads easily from person-to-person.

A person spreads the virus before they feel sick.

Hepatitis A affects people differently:

- 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
- Others can be very sick for months and a few may die of liver failure
- People who already have chronic liver disease are at higher risk for a serious case of hepatitis A

What are the symptoms of hepatitis A?

Not everyone shows symptoms. Symptoms may 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 feces (poop)
- joint pain



How does hepatitis A spread?

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

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

Who is at higher risk?

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

- Use injection and non-injection drugs
- Are men who have sex with men
- Are homeless or in temporary housing
- Are, or have been recently, incarcerated
- Have sexual activities with someone who has hepatitis A
- Have close contact, care for, or live with someone who has hepatitis A

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

If you get sick with symptoms of hepatitis A, immediately seek health care and get tested.

Urge your friends and family members to do the same if they become sick.

