

Health Advisory: Hepatitis A outbreak

State and local public health agencies have been investigating a large hepatitis A outbreak in southeast Michigan. Since August 2016, more than 485 people have become ill and 19 people have died. The majority of those who are ill live in Southeast Michigan, but the illness has begun to spread to other areas of the state. At this time, there have been no cases linked to the outbreak in Clinton, Gratiot or Montcalm counties. For updates on the outbreak, visit www.michigan.gov/hepatitisAoutbreak.

What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is serious, highly contagious disease of the liver caused by the hepatitis A virus (HAV). Hepatitis A is found in the feces of people with the disease. You can get hepatitis A by eating contaminated food or water, during sex, or just by living with an infected person. Illness can appear 15 to 50 days after exposure and can last for several weeks. For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/hepatitis.

What are the symptoms of hepatitis A?

Not all people infected with hepatitis A experience illness, but symptoms can include:

- Nausea and vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Feeling tired
- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Yellowing of the skin and eyes (see photo)
- Dark urine
- Pale-colored feces
- Joint pain



How can hepatitis A be prevented?

The best way to prevent infection is to get vaccinated.

Additional ways to help stop the spread of hepatitis A include:

- Washing hands frequently with soap and warm water after using the bathroom or changing a diaper and before or after preparing food
- Do not share towels, toothbrushes or eating utensils
- Do not share food, drinks, drugs or cigarettes
- Do not have sex with someone who has hepatitis A

Who is at-risk?

- Men who have sex with men (MSM)
- People who have sex with someone who is infected
- People with a history of substance abuse
- The homeless or those in transient housing
- People who are incarcerated
- Food handlers
- Healthcare workers
- Those who live with, work with or care for any of the above populations
- People with chronic liver disease

If you think you may have hepatitis A, contact your medical provider!

If you are in one of the at-risk categories and would like to be vaccinated, contact the Mid-Michigan District Health Department for an appointment:

Clinton County: 989-224-2195

Gratiot County: 989-875-3681

Montcalm County: 989-831-5237



www.mmdhd.org