

Health Department needs your help to stop the spread of Hepatitis A



Posted on Wednesday, April 4th, 2018 and is filed under [Miscellaneous](#), [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

Michigan is in the midst of a large Hepatitis A outbreak that has caused hundreds of illnesses, hospitalizations, and claimed lives. Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) is asking for the public's help to stop the spread of this disease.

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious virus that causes serious liver disease. The hepatitis A virus is found in the feces of people infected with hepatitis. According to Dr. Jennifer Morse, MMDHD's Medical Director, you can get hepatitis A by consuming food or water contaminated with the virus, having intercourse or sharing things with someone who is infected, or just by living with an infected person.

When someone is exposed to hepatitis A, they usually develop symptoms in fifteen to fifty days and are sick for several weeks or months. Not everyone will develop symptoms, but those who do feel tired, have nausea, vomiting, belly pain, loss of appetite, fever, yellowing of the skin or eyes, dark colored urine, pale-colored feces and joint pain. If you have these symptoms you should contact your doctor immediately.

People infected with hepatitis A in this outbreak have been very sick. Over eighty percent of those infected have been hospitalized and many have died. For this reason, it is important for all of us to know how to protect ourselves and others from this infection.

You can take the following precautions to help prevent getting or spreading Hepatitis A:

Hepatitis A is very contagious, so don't share food, drinks, eating utensils, tooth brushes, towels, drugs, or smoking materials with others.

Wash your hands often, especially after using the restroom and before preparing food.

Get vaccinated! If you believe you are at-risk of getting hepatitis A, you should be vaccinated. You can call the Mid-Michigan District Health Department to make an appointment to get vaccinated at 989-224-2195 in Clinton County, 989-875-3681 in Gratiot County or 989-831-5237 in Montcalm County. You can also visit the health department's website at www.mmdhd.org to see a complete list of Hepatitis A vaccination clinics offered by MMDHD and other health departments State-wide.