



## How Can I Prevent Getting Hepatitis A?

The following guidelines are recommended to help prevent Hepatitis A:

- Get Vaccinated!!
- Wash your hands well with soap and water after using the toilet and before preparing and eating food and ice for drinks, or changing diapers.
- If you believe someone with whom you have had close contact has tested positive for Hepatitis A, please contact your local health department. Close contacts are those living in your home or are frequent visitors who could have prepared food or drinks for you.

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## How Do I Get the Vaccine for Hepatitis A?

- Hepatitis A vaccines are available for people 1 year of age and older. You may get the vaccine from your doctor or from the Tulsa Health Department at a cost.
- For further information about vaccines or to set up an appointment to receive the vaccination, please call the Tulsa Health Department at (918) 595-4107.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH)

## Local Resources

For information on Hepatitis A visit our website at:

<http://www.tulsa-health.org/community-health/epidemiology/>

or write:

Tulsa Health Department  
Planning & Epidemiology  
5051 S. 129th E. Ave.  
Tulsa, OK 74134

Other Contact Information:

Phone: 918/595-4505

Fax: 918/595-4588

E-mail: [epidemiology@tulsa-health.org](mailto:epidemiology@tulsa-health.org)

### For more information on Hepatitis A, visit:

- Oklahoma State Department of Health  
(405) 271-4060  
<http://www.health.state.ok.us/program/cdd/infec.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
(888) 443-7232  
[www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis)



**TULSA HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT**

Prepared by THD Planning & Epidemiology



# Hepatitis A Preventable Disease

Hepatitis A virus (HAV) is one of many hepatitis viruses causing inflammation of the liver. There are an estimated 9,000 new people infected with Hepatitis A yearly in the United States. There has been a decline in the number of hepatitis A cases in Oklahoma. For example there were 6 cases in 2005 compared to 1,497 cases in 1995.

TULSA HEALTH DEPARTMENT

# Hepatitis A

## What is Hepatitis A?

- ☛ HAV is caused by the Hepatitis A virus.
- ☛ Diagnosis is made based on the presence of an antibody known as HAV-IgM.
- ☛ IgM antibodies appear early in the disease and are markers of an acute infection.
- ☛ IgM antibodies are replaced by IgG antibodies which persist for life. These show that a person has been exposed to the Hepatitis A virus in the past or has been vaccinated against the disease.

## What are the Symptoms?

Children usually have no symptoms but one in every four adults who get hepatitis A have symptoms. Symptoms can be:

- ☛ Fever
- ☛ Dark urine and diarrhea
- ☛ Jaundice (yellowish eyes and skin)
- ☛ Tiredness
- ☛ Nausea/Vomiting
- ☛ Stomach pain
- ☛ Loss of appetite

## How do you get Hepatitis A?

- ☛ HAV is found in the stool (poop) of persons with the disease.
- ☛ HAV is spread from person to person by putting anything in the mouth that has been contaminated with the stool of a person with hepatitis A.

HAV is also spread by:

- ☛ Eating food contaminated by infected food handlers, including foods that are not cooked or are handled after cooking.
- ☛ Eating raw or uncooked shellfish harvested from contaminated waters.
- ☛ Eating contaminated produce such as lettuce and strawberries.

Hepatitis A is **NOT** spread by coughing, sneezing or other casual contact.

## Who is more likely to get Hepatitis A?

- ☛ Travelers to countries where hepatitis A is more common.
- ☛ Persons who share a household or have sexual contact with an infected person.
- ☛ Persons who use street drugs.
- ☛ Children and employees in child care centers, especially centers that have children in diapers, where a child or an employee has hepatitis A.
- ☛ Men who have sex with other men.
- ☛ Anyone eating Hepatitis A contaminated food or drinks.

## How Soon Do Symptoms Appear?

Infected individuals can transmit the virus to others as early as 2 weeks before symptoms appear. Persons with no symptoms can still spread the virus.

- ☛ Symptoms may suddenly appear.
- ☛ Incubation ranges 15 - 50 days and average 28 - 30 days.
- ☛ Once a person recovers from Hepatitis A, he/she will never get it again..

## Is There Treatment?

**No specific treatment is necessary or available for Hepatitis A.**

- ☛ Talk to your physician.
- ☛ Avoid the use of alcohol and drugs.
- ☛ Practice good hand washing after using the toilet and before preparing foods and ice for drinks.

