



To: Ohio Medicaid Managed Care Plans
Ohio Medicaid MyCare Ohio Plans

From: Roxanne Richardson, Acting Director
Office of Managed Care

Date: April 4, 2019

Subject: Statewide Hepatitis A Outbreak – Vaccine Coverage Mandate

Ohio is in the midst of a statewide outbreak of Hepatitis A. Since January 5, 2018, there have been 1,931 cases of Hepatitis A identified in Ohio. Historically, Ohio has seen about 40 cases per year.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has asked the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) and our partners for assistance in supporting local response efforts. To aid in these efforts ODM is requiring Medicaid managed care and MyCare Ohio Plans to assist in addressing this outbreak through the following activities:

- Notifying individuals who may be at risk for Hepatitis A infection including, but not limited to, any:
 - Individual who currently uses recreational drugs (regardless if he/she injects)
 - Individual experiencing homelessness or in transient living
 - Individual with direct contact (e.g., lives with, has sexual contact with, or is a caregiver for) someone infected with Hepatitis A
 - Children attending child care and their teachers/family members
 - Person who traveled to areas of United States where there is an outbreak or countries where Hepatitis A is common
 - Individual who was recently incarcerated
 - Individual with underlying liver disease (including cirrhosis, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C)
 - Individual with a clotting-factor disorder
- Encouraging individuals, and assisting if needed, to contact their provider for information about vaccination or to discuss post-exposure vaccination options, if applicable;
- Identifying and removing barriers for anyone who needs assistance accessing care, getting to appointments, etc.;
- Covering the Hepatitis A vaccine for members without prior authorization;
- Allowing the Hepatitis A vaccine for members through the pharmacy benefit;
- Disseminating educational materials (see attached); and
- Engaging your local counterparts to support outbreak response.

The USPTF-recommended Hepatitis A vaccine is covered through fee-for-service Medicaid. Effective with the date of this memorandum, managed care plans must cover the codes below for children and adults with no prior authorization requirements until further notice. For pediatric patients, plans cannot impose limits to use Hepatitis A vaccines only available through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. Plans must remove any system edits that would prevent payment of both the product cost and administration fee for Hepatitis A vaccines.

- For children ages birth through 18: procedure codes 90633 and 90634 are the VFC eligible hepatitis A vaccines.
- For adults age 19 and older: procedure codes 90632 (Hepatitis A) and 90636 (Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B) vaccine.

For current information about the outbreak and a county map, please see:

<https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/media-center/feature-stories/Hepatitis-A-Statewide-Community-Outbreak>.

Attachments

Hepatitis A

HOW IS IT SPREAD?



Not washing hands after using bathroom



Drug use

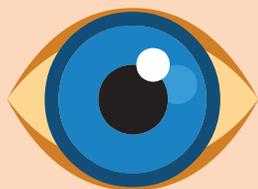


Having sex with infected partner(s)



Eating or drinking contaminated foods

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?



Yellowing of eyes and skin



Pale poop
dark pee



Fever



Nausea or throwing up

Other symptoms include: stomach pain, feeling tired or loss of appetite
If you have symptoms, see your doctor.

HOW DO I PREVENT THE SPREAD OF HEPATITIS A?



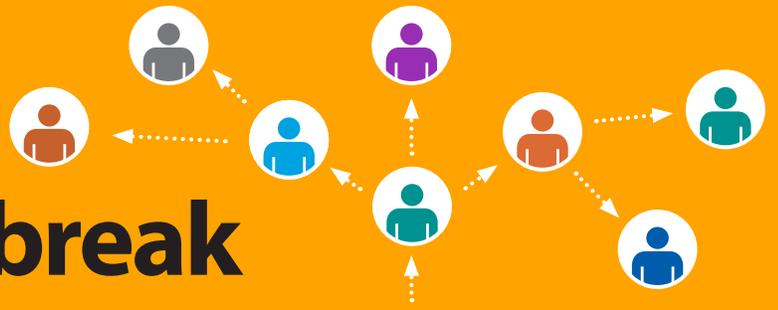
Wash your hands with soap and warm water after using the bathroom



Get vaccinated



Hepatitis A Outbreak



Hepatitis A is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis A virus. The virus is spreading from person to person and causing outbreaks around the country. It is very contagious among people who are not vaccinated.



Protect yourself and get vaccinated against hepatitis A

Who should get vaccinated?

- People who use drugs
- People who have unstable housing or are homeless
- People with hepatitis C and other serious liver problems
- People who are or were in jail or prison
- Men who have sex with men



Can hepatitis A be serious?

Hepatitis A can range from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a severe illness lasting several months. Although uncommon, hepatitis A can cause death. People who are older or have health conditions, including hepatitis C, are at higher risk of dying from hepatitis A.



Can hepatitis A be prevented?

Yes. The hepatitis A vaccine is safe and effective in preventing a person from getting infected with the hepatitis A virus. People who are at risk for hepatitis A should get vaccinated as soon as possible.



Practice good hand hygiene. Thoroughly washing hands with soap and warm water plays an important role in preventing the spread of many illnesses, including hepatitis A.



How is hepatitis A spread?

The hepatitis A virus is found in the blood and stool of an infected person and is easily spread from one person to another. In this outbreak, the hepatitis A virus is spreading from person to person, especially among people using drugs, having sex, and living close together.

What are the symptoms of hepatitis A?

Most adults get symptoms 2 to 7 weeks after exposure to the virus, but some adults do not get any symptoms. People can spread the virus to others even if they do not feel sick. Symptoms can include:



Yellow skin or eyes



Fatigue



Loss of appetite



Nausea



Vomiting



Abdominal pain



Dark urine or light-colored stools



Joint pain



Fever



Diarrhea

If you have any of these symptoms, see a health professional.



What if you have been exposed to someone with hepatitis A?

If you have been around someone diagnosed with hepatitis A, contact a health professional as soon as possible. Getting the hepatitis A vaccine within 2 weeks after exposure could prevent you from getting sick. After that time, the vaccine does not prevent illness from your recent exposure but can still prevent you from getting hepatitis A in the future.

If you develop symptoms of hepatitis A, contact a health professional.



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www.cdc.gov/hepatitis

February 2019

VIRAL HEPATITIS

Information for Gay and Bisexual Men



What is viral hepatitis?

Viral hepatitis is an infection of the liver caused by one of several viruses. In the United States, the most common types of viral hepatitis are Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C. While all three types of hepatitis can cause similar symptoms, each virus is spread in different ways.

Are gay and bisexual men at risk for viral hepatitis?

Yes. Among adults, an estimated 10% of new Hepatitis A cases and 20% of new Hepatitis B cases occur in gay or bisexual men. Gay and bisexual men are at increased risk for Hepatitis C if they are involved in high-risk behaviors.

Sharing needles or other equipment used to inject drugs puts a person at risk for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV. Of people with HIV infection, 10% also have Hepatitis B and 25% also have Hepatitis C. New research shows that gay men who are HIV-positive and have multiple sex partners may increase their risk for Hepatitis C.

How is viral hepatitis spread?

- **Hepatitis A** is usually spread when a person ingests fecal matter—even in microscopic amounts—from an infected person. Among men who have sexual contact with other men, Hepatitis A can be spread through direct anal-oral contact or contact with fingers or objects that have been in or near the anus of an infected person. Hepatitis A can also be spread through contaminated food or water, which most often occurs in countries where Hepatitis A is common.
- **Hepatitis B** is spread when body fluids—such as semen or blood—from a person infected with the Hepatitis B virus enter the body of someone who is not infected. The Hepatitis B virus is 50–100 times more infectious than HIV and is easily transmitted during sexual activity. Hepatitis B also can be spread through sharing needles, syringes, or other equipment used to inject drugs.
- **Hepatitis C** is spread through contact with the blood of an infected person, primarily through sharing needles, syringes, or other injection drug equipment. Hepatitis C can also be spread when getting tattoos and body piercings in informal settings or with non-sterile instruments. Although uncommon, Hepatitis C can also be spread through sexual contact. Having a sexually transmitted disease (STD) or HIV, sex with multiple partners, or rough sex appears to increase a person's risk for Hepatitis C.

The best way to protect yourself from Hepatitis A and B is to get vaccinated.

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How would someone know if they have viral hepatitis?

Many people do not have symptoms, so the only way to know if you have hepatitis is to get tested. Doctors diagnose hepatitis using one or more blood tests, depending on the type of hepatitis.

How serious is viral hepatitis?

Hepatitis A can only be an acute, or a short term, infection which usually lasts no more than 6 months. Most adults with Hepatitis A feel sick for a few months and usually recover completely without lasting liver damage. Although rare, Hepatitis A can cause liver failure and death.

While Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C can also be acute infections, each can also develop into a chronic, or lifelong, infection. Over time, about 15%–25% of people with chronic hepatitis develop serious liver conditions, including liver damage, cirrhosis, liver failure, and even liver cancer.

What are the symptoms of viral hepatitis?

Many people with viral hepatitis do not have symptoms and do not know they are infected. For acute hepatitis, symptoms usually appear within several weeks to several months of exposure and can last up to 6 months. Symptoms of chronic viral hepatitis can take decades to develop and people can live with an infection for years and not feel sick. When symptoms do appear with chronic hepatitis, they often are a sign of advanced liver disease.

Symptoms for both acute and chronic viral hepatitis can include: fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, grey-colored stools, joint pain, and jaundice.

How is viral hepatitis treated?

For people with acute hepatitis, doctors usually recommend rest, adequate nutrition, fluids, and in certain situations, antiviral medication. In some cases, people with acute hepatitis are hospitalized.

Several treatments are available that can significantly improve health and delay or reverse the effects of liver disease for those with Hepatitis B and new treatments are available for Hepatitis C that can get rid of or clear the virus.

Should gay and bisexual men be vaccinated?

Yes. Experts recommend that all gay and bisexual men be vaccinated for Hepatitis A and B. The Hepatitis A and B vaccines can be given separately or as a combination vaccine. The vaccines are safe, effective, and require 2-3 shots given over a period of 6 months depending on the type of vaccine. A person should complete all shots in the series for long-term protection.

There is no vaccine for Hepatitis C. The best way to prevent Hepatitis C is by avoiding behaviors that can spread the disease, especially sharing needles or other equipment to inject drugs.

Should gay and bisexual men get tested for viral hepatitis?

It depends upon the type of hepatitis and a person's risk factors. Testing is not recommended for Hepatitis A.

CDC recommends gay and bisexual men get tested for Hepatitis B. Getting tested can determine if a person is or has been infected with Hepatitis B and if he will need the vaccine series for protection.

Testing for Hepatitis C is not recommended for gay and bisexual men unless they were born from 1945 through 1965, have HIV, or are engaging in risky behaviors.

For more information

Talk to your doctor, call your health department, or visit www.cdc.gov/hepatitis.

Hepatitis A Disinfection Guidelines

Hepatitis A is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis A virus. Highly contagious, the hepatitis A virus is usually transmitted by the fecal-oral route, either through person-to-person contact or consumption of contaminated food or beverages. Contamination can occur when infected persons do not wash their hands properly after going to the bathroom and then touch other objects or food items. Surfaces that are frequently touched should be cleaned and sanitized often. These surfaces include:

- Faucets
- Kitchen Surfaces
- Doorknobs
- Recreation Equipment
- Sinks
- Phones
- Keyboards
- Railings
- Toilets and Commodes
- Tables and Chairs
- Wheelchairs and Walkers
- Remote Controls
- Light Switch Plates
- High Chairs
- Linens and Bedding
- Ice Machines

Disinfection for Exposed Surfaces

Chlorine Bleach: Mix 1 and 2/3 cups bleach per 1 gallon of water (5000ppm). Use the solution promptly to disinfect stainless steel, food/mouth contact items, tile floors, nonporous surfaces, counters, sinks and toilets.

Allow 1 minute of contact time with surface and then rinse with water due to high bleach concentration. Discard any unused diluted mixtures immediately after use.

Other Disinfectants: To determine if a product is effective against hepatitis A, review the product label or specification sheet and ensure it states effective against hepatitis A or norovirus. The product name can be searched in the Environmental Protection Agency’s registered product database at:

<https://iaspub.epa.gov/apex/pesticides/f?p=PPLS:1>

Remember

- Wear gloves and protect your clothing.
- Use chemicals in well-ventilated areas.
- Avoid contact between incompatible chemicals.
- For surfaces that are corroded or damaged by bleach, use another product effective against HAV.

Steps to Cleaning Up Vomit or Feces

- Block off area immediately.
- Put on personal protective equipment (PPE), including two sets of gloves, masks, eye protection or face shield, and gown.
- Clean up visible debris using disposable absorbent material (paper towels or other type of disposable cloths). Handle contaminated material as little as possible and with minimal agitation to reduce aerosolization.
- Discard soiled items carefully in a durable plastic bag.
- Disinfect area and objects surrounding the contamination with an appropriate disinfectant effective against hepatitis A (see box to the left).
- Take off outer set of gloves (leaving inner set of gloves on), gown and mask, in that order, and discard before exiting the clean-up area.
- Place discarded PPE in a durable plastic bag.
- Wearing the inner set of gloves, transport bag to a secure trash container; do not allow the bag to contact clothing.
- Dispose of inner gloves.
- Always wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm, soapy water after handling any contaminated material, trash, or waste.

Surface-Specific Tips

Toys

- Toys that enter a child’s mouth must be disinfected, rinsed thoroughly, and air dried or run through a dishwasher at the highest temperature setting.
- Remove visible debris on softer toys that have been soiled and launder at the highest temperature setting. Discard if necessary.

Linens, Clothing, Textiles

- Keep contaminated and uncontaminated items separate.
- Wash in a pre-wash cycle, then use a regular wash cycle with detergent, and dry at the highest temperature setting.

Food Surfaces

- After disinfection, rinse food prep area with water.
- Prevent chemical contact with food during cleaning.
- Secure chemicals away from food after cleaning.

Medical Equipment

- Medical equipment used for infected patients should be either dedicated to that room or be thoroughly disinfected upon removal from the room.
- Selection of cleaning agent should be consistent with the equipment manufacturer’s recommendations.

Additional Information

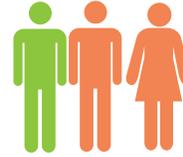
www.odh.ohio.gov/hepa
www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/index.htm

Local Health Department information:
<https://www.odh.ohio.gov/en/localhealthdistricts/localhealthdistricts>

Vaccine Availability for the Hepatitis A Outbreak Response

Ohio declared a hepatitis A outbreak in June of 2018. The case count continues to rise with over 1531 cases currently, including 5 deaths. Surrounding states, like West Virginia and Kentucky, are also heavily impacted; each have more than 2200 and 3500 cases, respectively. Hepatitis A is typically a self-limited disease, however morbidity and mortality in this outbreak have been higher than usual due to co-morbidities among the risk groups, chiefly chronic liver disease. Individuals most at risk are a difficult population to reach, therefore, expanding our vaccination partners is important for controlling the outbreak.

About **60%** of infected persons require hospitalization



About **1** out of **3** cases are co-infected with hepatitis C.

Individuals most at risk

- People with a history of substance use
- People experiencing homeless or in transient living
- Men who have sex with men (MSM)
- People with underlying liver disease (including cirrhosis, hepatitis B and hepatitis C)
- People who are or were recently incarcerated

How to assist with the hepatitis A outbreak

Vaccination is key to curbing the hepatitis A outbreak among high risk patients. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has free outbreak vaccine that can be provided to approved healthcare facilities interested in protecting the at risk population from hepatitis A disease.

Requirement for receiving vaccine from ODH

- Complete a site visit and training with ODH
- Target the at-risk population
- Maintain proper storage and handling of vaccine and report any issues to ODH
- Document all doses given into the state immunization registry: ImpactSIIS

Implementing hepatitis A vaccination

Implementing hepatitis A vaccination as a standard practice can be challenging. ODH recommends educating staff throughout the facility about the hepatitis A outbreak and that vaccination is the key to prevention. Each facility will need to determine how best to integrate universal screening into patient assessment and staff/provider work flow. Suggestions include:

- Standing orders for nurses to screen and vaccinate
- Provider screening and vaccination during patient assessment
- Risk factor screening cards shown to patients to aid in the determination of outbreak vaccine eligibility
- Notification alert through Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system
- Implementation similar to facility's tetanus (Td) vaccination process
- Vaccination upon admittance to a facility for individuals meeting high risk criteria

Additional information

For more information contact the Ohio Department of Health Immunization Program at 1-800-282-0546

www.odh.ohio.gov/hepa

www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/index.htm

HEPATITIS A

General Information

What is hepatitis?

“Hepatitis” means inflammation of the liver. The liver is a vital organ that processes nutrients, filters the blood, and fights infections. When the liver is inflamed or damaged, its function can be affected.

Hepatitis is most often caused by a virus. In the United States, the most common types of viral hepatitis are Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C. Heavy alcohol use, toxins, some medications, and certain medical conditions can also cause hepatitis.

What is Hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious liver infection caused by the Hepatitis A virus. It can range in severity from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a severe illness lasting several months.

Who is at risk?

Although anyone can get Hepatitis A, some people are at greater risk, such as those who:

- Travel to or live in countries where Hepatitis A is common
- Use recreational drugs, whether injected or not
- Have sexual contact with someone who has Hepatitis A
- Have clotting-factor disorders, such as hemophilia
- Are men who have sexual encounters with other men
- Are household members or caregivers of a person infected with Hepatitis A

How common is Hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A still occurs in the United States, although not as frequently as it once did. Over the last several decades, there has been more than a 90% decrease in Hepatitis A cases. New cases are now estimated to be around 3,000 each year. Many experts believe this decline is a result of the vaccination of children and people at risk for Hepatitis A. Many of the new cases, however, are from American travelers who got infected while traveling to parts of the world where Hepatitis A is common.



Hepatitis A can be prevented with a safe and effective vaccine.

How is Hepatitis A spread?

Hepatitis A is usually spread when a person ingests fecal matter—even in microscopic amounts—from contact with objects, food, or drinks contaminated by feces or stool from an infected person.

Hepatitis A can be spread when:

- An infected person does not wash his/her hands properly after going to the bathroom and then touches objects or food
- A caregiver does not properly wash his or her hands after changing diapers or cleaning up the stool of an infected person
- Someone engages in sexual activities with an infected person

Hepatitis A also can be spread through contaminated food or water. Contamination of food can happen at any point: growing, harvesting, processing, handling, and even after cooking. This most often occurs in countries where Hepatitis A is common.

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What are the symptoms of Hepatitis A?

Not everyone has symptoms. If symptoms develop, they usually appear 2 to 6 weeks after infection and can include:

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Dark urine
- Grey-colored stools
- Joint pain
- Jaundice

Symptoms are more likely to occur in adults than in children. They usually last less than 2 months, although some people can be ill for as long as 6 months.



People can spread Hepatitis A even if they don't look or feel sick. Many children and some adults have no symptoms.

How is Hepatitis A diagnosed and treated?

A doctor can determine if a person has Hepatitis A by discussing his or her symptoms and taking a blood sample. To treat Hepatitis A, doctors usually recommend rest, adequate nutrition, fluids, and medical monitoring. Some people will need to be hospitalized. It can take a few months before people begin to feel better.

How serious is Hepatitis A?

Most people who get Hepatitis A feel sick for several months, but they usually recover completely and do not have lasting liver damage. Sometimes Hepatitis A can cause liver failure and death, although this is rare and occurs more commonly in people older than 50 and people with other liver diseases.

Can Hepatitis A be prevented?

Yes. The best way to prevent Hepatitis A is by getting vaccinated. Experts recommend the vaccine for all children, and people with certain risk factors and medical conditions. The vaccine is also recommended for travelers to certain international countries, even if travel occurs for short times or on closed resorts. The Hepatitis A vaccine is safe and effective and given as 2 shots, 6 months apart. Both shots are needed for long-term protection. Ask if your health plan will cover travel related vaccines. You can get vaccinated at your doctor's office, as well as travel clinics and other locations. Lower cost vaccination may be available at certain pharmacies and your local health department.

Who should get vaccinated against Hepatitis A?

Vaccination is recommended for certain groups, including:

- All children at age 1 year
- Travelers to countries where Hepatitis A is common
- Family and caregivers of adoptees from countries where Hepatitis A is common
- Men who have sexual encounters with other men
- Users of recreational drugs, whether injected or not
- People with chronic or long-term liver disease, including Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C
- People with clotting-factor disorders

For more information

Talk to your health professional, call your health department, or visit www.cdc.gov/hepatitis or www.cdc.gov/travel.