November 14, 2017

TO: MACOMB COUNTY EMPLOYEES

FROM: KEVIN P. LOKAR, M.D., M.P.H. MEDICAL DIRECTOR
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SUBJECT: HEPATITIS A OUTBREAK IN SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

As you may know, there has been an ongoing outbreak of hepatitis A in Southeast Michigan since August 2016. A total of 495 cases have been reported as of November 7, 2017. Approximately one-third of these cases have been reported in Macomb County.

Half of the cases have reported substance abuse as a risk factor for infection and 19 cases have reported working as food handlers. Infected food handlers can transmit the hepatitis A virus through contaminated food items.

Vaccination against hepatitis A is recommended for the following persons:

- Persons who are homeless
- Persons who are incarcerated
- Persons who use injection and non-injection illegal drugs
- Persons who work with the three high risk populations listed above
- Men who have sex with men
- Food handlers
- Healthcare workers
- Persons with underlying liver disease, such as cirrhosis, hepatitis B or hepatitis C
- Travelers to countries with high rates of hepatitis A
- Persons with clotting factor disorders
- Persons who have had close contact (e.g., household or sexual) with someone who has hepatitis A
- Any person who is concerned about hepatitis A virus exposure and wants to be immune

The hepatitis A vaccine is available at the Macomb County Health Department. The Department can bill some commercial insurances. Persons who have no insurance or who have insurance that does not cover the cost of vaccines may be eligible to receive the hepatitis A vaccine at reduced cost.

Attached is information about hepatitis A, the hepatitis A vaccine, and immunization clinic hours at the Macomb County Health Department.

If you have any questions, please contact the Macomb County Health Department at (586) 469-5235.

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Attachment
Hepatitis A is in Macomb County

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious liver disease caused by a virus spread from person to person. It can last a few weeks to several months.

How is it spread?

- Eating or drinking foods contaminated by hepatitis A
- Sexual contact with an infected person
- Touching contaminated objects or surfaces and then putting your hands in or near your mouth

What are the symptoms?

- Throwing up/feeling like throwing up
- Fever
- Yellow skin and eyes
- Other symptoms include:
  - Feeling tired
  - Loss of appetite
  - Stomach pain
  - Grey poop
  - Dark pee
  - Joint pain

How to protect yourself and your family:

- Always wash hands with soap and water before eating/preparing food and after using the bathroom/changing diapers
- Get vaccinated
- Practice safe sex: Abstain from sex or use a latex condom

For more information visit:
health.macombgov.org
facebook.com/PublicHealthMacomb
What is hepatitis A?
Hepatitis A is a contagious liver disease that results from infection with the Hepatitis A virus. It can range in severity from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a severe illness lasting several months.

How common is Hepatitis A?
Hepatitis A still occurs in the United States, although not as frequently as it once did. Over the last 20 years, there has been more than a 90% decrease in Hepatitis A cases. New cases are now estimated to be around 20,000 each year. Many experts believe this decline is a result of the vaccination of children and people at risk for Hepatitis A.

How is Hepatitis A spread?
Hepatitis A virus 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 or 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 certain sexual activities, such as oral-anal contact with an infected person

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

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
- Have sexual contact with someone who has Hepatitis A
- Are men who have sexual encounters with other men
- Use recreational drugs, whether injected or not
- Have clotting-factor disorders, such as hemophilia
- Are household members or caregivers of a person infected with Hepatitis A
What are the symptoms of hepatitis A?
Not everyone has symptoms. If symptoms develop, they usually appear 2 to 6 weeks after exposure and can include:

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

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.

How can hepatitis A be prevented?
The best way to prevent Hepatitis A is by getting vaccinated. Experts recommend the vaccine for all children, some international travelers, and people with certain risk factors and medical conditions. The Hepatitis A vaccine is safe and effective and given as 2 shots, 6 months apart. Both shots are needed for long-term protection.

Frequent handwashing with soap and water – particularly after using the bathroom, changing a diaper, or before preparing or eating food – also helps prevent the spread of Hepatitis A.

Who should get vaccinated against Hepatitis A?
Vaccination is recommended for certain groups, including:

- 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
- Travelers to countries where Hepatitis A is common
- People with clotting-factor disorders
- Family and caregivers of adoptees from countries where Hepatitis A is common
- All children at age 1 year

For more information, go to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and search the disease you are interested in their A to Z Index in the blue bar at the top of the page.
**Hepatitis A Vaccine**

**What You Need to Know**

1. **Why get vaccinated?**

   Hepatitis A is a serious liver disease. It is caused by the hepatitis A virus (HAV). HAV is spread from person to person through contact with the feces (stool) of people who are infected, which can easily happen if someone does not wash his or her hands properly. You can also get hepatitis A from food, water, or objects contaminated with HAV.

   Symptoms of hepatitis A can include:
   - fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, and/or joint pain
   - severe stomach pains and diarrhea (mainly in children), or
   - jaundice (yellow skin or eyes, dark urine, clay-colored bowel movements).

   These symptoms usually appear 2 to 6 weeks after exposure and usually last less than 2 months, although some people can be ill for as long as 6 months. If you have hepatitis A you may be too ill to work.

   Children often do not have symptoms, but most adults do. You can spread HAV without having symptoms.

   Hepatitis A can cause liver failure and death, although this is rare and occurs more commonly in persons 50 years of age or older and persons with other liver diseases, such as hepatitis B or C.

   **Hepatitis A vaccine can prevent hepatitis A.** Hepatitis A vaccines were recommended in the United States beginning in 1996. Since then, the number of cases reported each year in the U.S. has dropped from around 31,000 cases to fewer than 1,500 cases.

2. **Hepatitis A vaccine**

   Hepatitis A vaccine is an inactivated (killed) vaccine. You will need 2 doses for long-lasting protection. These doses should be given at least 6 months apart.

   Children are routinely vaccinated between their first and second birthdays (12 through 23 months of age). Older children and adolescents can get the vaccine after 23 months. Adults who have not been vaccinated previously and want to be protected against hepatitis A can also get the vaccine.

   You should get hepatitis A vaccine if you:
   - are traveling to countries where hepatitis A is common,
   - are a man who has sex with other men,
   - use illegal drugs,
   - have a chronic liver disease such as hepatitis B or hepatitis C,
   - are being treated with clotting-factor concentrates,
   - work with hepatitis A-infected animals or in a hepatitis A research laboratory, or
   - expect to have close personal contact with an international adoptee from a country where hepatitis A is common.

   Ask your healthcare provider if you want more information about any of these groups.

   There are no known risks to getting hepatitis A vaccine at the same time as other vaccines.

3. **Some people should not get this vaccine**

Tell the person who is giving you the vaccine:

- **If you have any severe, life-threatening allergies.** If you ever had a life-threatening allergic reaction after a dose of hepatitis A vaccine, or have a severe allergy to any part of this vaccine, you may be advised not to get vaccinated. Ask your health care provider if you want information about vaccine components.

- **If you are not feeling well.** If you have a mild illness, such as a cold, you can probably get the vaccine today. If you are moderately or severely ill, you should probably wait until you recover. Your doctor can advise you.
**4 Risks of a vaccine reaction**

With any medicine, including vaccines, there is a chance of side effects. These are usually mild and go away on their own, but serious reactions are also possible.

Most people who get hepatitis A vaccine do not have any problems with it.

**Minor problems** following hepatitis A vaccine include:
- soreness or redness where the shot was given
- low-grade fever
- headache
- tiredness

If these problems occur, they usually begin soon after the shot and last 1 or 2 days.

Your doctor can tell you more about these reactions.

**Other problems that could happen after this vaccine:**
- People sometimes faint after a medical procedure, including vaccination. Sitting or lying down for about 15 minutes can help prevent fainting, and injuries caused by a fall. Tell your provider if you feel dizzy, or have vision changes or ringing in the ears.
- Some people get shoulder pain that can be more severe and longer lasting than the more routine soreness that can follow injections. This happens very rarely.
- Any medication can cause a severe allergic reaction. Such reactions from a vaccine are very rare, estimated at about 1 in a million doses, and would happen within a few minutes to a few hours after the vaccination.

As with any medicine, there is a very remote chance of a vaccine causing a serious injury or death.

The safety of vaccines is always being monitored. For more information, visit: www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/

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**5 What if there is a serious problem?**

**What should I look for?**

- Look for anything that concerns you, such as signs of a severe allergic reaction, very high fever, or unusual behavior.

**Signs of a severe allergic reaction** can include hives, swelling of the face and throat, difficulty breathing, a fast heartbeat, dizziness, and weakness. These would start a few minutes to a few hours after the vaccination.

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**6 The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program**

The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) is a federal program that was created to compensate people who may have been injured by certain vaccines.

Persons who believe they may have been injured by a vaccine can learn about the program and about filing a claim by calling 1-800-338-1382 or visiting the VICP website at www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation. There is a time limit to file a claim for compensation.

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**7 How can I learn more?**

- Ask your healthcare provider. He or she can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information. 1-888-737-4687
- Call your local or state health department.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - Call 1-800-232-4636 (1-800-CDC-INFO) or
  - Visit CDC’s website at www.cdc.gov/vaccines

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**Vaccine Information Statement**

**Hepatitis A Vaccine**

7/20/2016

42 U.S.C. § 300aa-26
### IMMUNIZATION CLINIC HOURS

Walk-Ins Accepted, Appointments Preferred  
**EFFECTIVE 8-1-2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Center</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
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<td>Open 8:30-4:30</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Open 8:30-6:30</td>
<td>Open 8:30-4:30</td>
<td>Closed*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43525 Elizabeth Road Mt. Clemens, MI 48043 (586) 469-5372</td>
<td>TB testing: 8:30-4:30</td>
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<td>TB testing: 8:30-4:30</td>
<td>No TB testing</td>
<td>*Open 3rd Fridays, 11:30-4:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southwest Health Center</td>
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<td>Open 8:30-6:30</td>
<td>Open*</td>
<td>No TB testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27690 Van Dyke, Ste. B Warren, MI 48093 (586) 465-8537</td>
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<td>TB testing: 8:30-4:30</td>
<td>TB testing: 8:30-4:30</td>
<td>8:30-4:30</td>
<td>*Except 3rd Fridays, Open 11:30-4:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Family Resource Center</td>
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<td>Open*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25401 Harper Avenue St. Clair Shores, MI 48081 (586) 466-6800</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8:30-4:30</td>
<td>*CLOSED 3rd Fridays</td>
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For **CHILDREN**: A PARENT OR GUARDIAN **MUST** be available to complete & sign clinic health forms for each child. Forms are available at: [http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-FamilyHealthServices-ImmunizationClinic](http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-FamilyHealthServices-ImmunizationClinic)

**WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING WITH YOU TO THE HEALTH CENTER:**

1. IMMUNIZATION RECORD(S) for all persons being immunized
2. INSURANCE CARD(S) for all persons being immunized
3. VALID IDENTIFICATION

**PAYMENT/BILLING INFORMATION:**

- There are charges for the administration of vaccines — **cash or check only**.
- Medicaid/Medicare will be billed for approved vaccines.
- Macomb County Health Department can bill some commercial insurances for immunization services.
- Adults and children who have no insurance or who have insurance that does not cover the cost of vaccines may be eligible to receive vaccines at reduced cost.

For more information:

- Please call (586) 469-5372 or (586) 465-8537 and ask to speak with an Immunization Program Registered Nurse, or
- Visit our website for updates and holiday schedules: [http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-FamilyHealthServices-ImmunizationClinic](http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-FamilyHealthServices-ImmunizationClinic)
- Like us on Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/PublicHealthMacomb](https://www.facebook.com/PublicHealthMacomb)