

How can you protect yourself and your children from hepatitis A?

- ★ There are different types of hepatitis (including hepatitis A, hepatitis B and hepatitis C). While the hepatitis B vaccine series is routinely given to infants, the hepatitis A vaccine is only available to children two years and older. Therefore, parents might not be aware that this is a vaccine their child has not received.
- ★ While there is currently no cure for hepatitis A, vaccination, particularly among children, is the best way to provide long-term protection and prevent the spread of this common disease. In addition, it is important to always wash hands with soap and water after using the bathroom, after changing a diaper, and before preparing and eating food.



- ★ The vaccine is given in two doses. The first dose can be given starting at age two years or older and the next can be given six to 12 months later.
- ★ The hepatitis A vaccine is safe and generally well tolerated. Side effects, such as soreness at the site where the shot was given, are mild and usually last for only the first few days after vaccination.
- ★ For parents with medical insurance, the cost of the vaccine is usually covered for children. For parents without insurance, your healthcare provider may be able to provide free vaccine under the federal Vaccines for Children program (VFC).

About the National Association of Child Care Professionals (NACCP)

The National Association of Child Care Professionals (NACCP) was established in 1984. It is the nation's leader among associations serving child care owners, directors, and administrators. The organization's goal is to improve, enhance and strengthen the credibility of the people who lead the child care industry by providing membership services and benefits. It is the only association exclusively dedicated to child care management without regard to a center's tax status and corporate sponsorship. NACCP membership is available to any individual in a "supervisory or decision-making capacity in the child care industry and vendors who service the industry at large."

For more information:
Visit our Web site at
www.NACCP.org or call
1-800-537-1118



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LEADING THE WAY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HEPATITIS A

Learn How to Protect Your Children, Yourself and Your Family

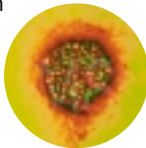


What is hepatitis A?

- ★ Hepatitis A is an easily spreadable virus that affects the liver. Cases of hepatitis A are frequently reported in the United States and up to 270,000 Americans get the virus each year.
- ★ Cases of hepatitis A can occur in any age group, but most occur among children under the age of 10.
- ★ There is no cure for hepatitis A, but the disease can be prevented with a simple vaccination.

How is the hepatitis A virus transmitted?

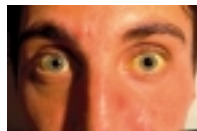
- ★ Hepatitis A is usually spread from person to person by putting something in the mouth (even though it may look clean) that has been contaminated with the stool of a person with hepatitis A. It may also be spread through close person-to-person contact or by contaminated food or water. Children at child care centers may easily spread the virus to staff and other children during diaper changing, for example.
- ★ Although children do not always show symptoms of the disease, they can still have the infection, and can easily pass it on to adults without knowing it. This may be dangerous for adults, who could develop severe symptoms, liver disease and even death in rare cases.



A microscopic picture of the hepatitis A virus

Symptoms of hepatitis A

- ★ The symptoms of hepatitis A include fever, tiredness, loss of appetite, stomach upset and cramping, dark urine and jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin).
- ★ Up to 15 percent of patients with hepatitis A may show improvement in their symptoms only to suffer once again from the disease, usually after four weeks. A relapse like this can occur more than once and there is no way to tell if it will happen.



Jaundiced Yellow Eyes

How can hepatitis A impact you and your family?

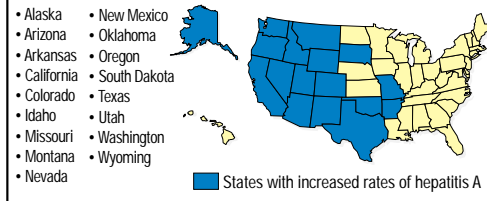
- ★ Up to 22 percent of adults suffering from hepatitis A require hospitalization, and may miss up to five weeks of work due to the illness. Patients may suffer liver failure after becoming infected with the virus, and it is estimated that hepatitis A is the cause of death for about 100 people each year.
- ★ While most people do recover fully within six months, the experience can continue to be stressful if the patient lost money due to time taken off from work as well as the associated medical care costs.



Is your child at risk for contracting hepatitis A?

- ★ Children are one of the highest risk groups for hepatitis A infection because they often come into close contact with other children in school, playground and child care settings.
- ★ Individuals living in areas with high rates of hepatitis A, such as the 17 states in the United States with rates of the disease greater than the national average (see below), are also at particular risk for getting the virus.

These states have increased rates of hepatitis A compared with the rest of the nation.



- ★ Hepatitis A vaccine for children in certain high risk areas is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

How do you know if you or your child has been infected with hepatitis A?

- ★ Hepatitis A can show itself differently in adults than in children. About 75 percent of infected children show some symptoms of hepatitis A, such as stomach upset, fever, diarrhea, tiredness and body aches.

Symptoms of Hepatitis A

- Jaundice (*yellowing of the skin or eyes*)
- Fever
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Stomach upset
- Stomach cramping
- Dark urine
- Flu-like symptoms

- ★ It is also important to note that symptoms do not usually appear during the first two weeks to one month from the time of contact. Because the symptoms are not always noticeable, infected individuals can spread the virus to others without knowing it. In fact, approximately 50 percent of people with hepatitis A do not know how they got the disease.

