

WHAT NORTH GEORGIANS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HEPATITIS A

What is Hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable, communicable disease of the liver caused by the hepatitis A virus (HAV). It is usually transmitted person-to-person through food or objects contaminated by fecal material.

YOU Can Help Prevent the Spread of the Hepatitis A Virus.

The Georgia Department of Public Health has noted a concerning increase of hepatitis A cases in our area, and the North Georgia Health District wishes to be proactive in preventing an outbreak through ***no-cost-to-clients hepatitis A vaccinations**. People who are at greatest risk for becoming infected, including persons incarcerated in jails, homeless persons, drug users and men who have sex with men, are especially urged to come to a health department in Cherokee, Fannin, Gilmer, Murray, Pickens or Whitfield County to receive a hepatitis A vaccine at ***no out-of-pocket expense**.

If anyone suspects a case of hepatitis A, please report it to your County Health Department (*refer to phone numbers below*). If reporting after hours, please call 1-866-PUB-HLTH (1-866-782-4584). Persons who may be infected should immediately contact a healthcare provider for evaluation and treatment.

How serious is hepatitis A?

Most people who get hepatitis A feel sick for several weeks but usually recover completely and do not have lasting liver damage. In rare cases, hepatitis A can cause liver failure and death; this is more common in people older than 50 and in people with other liver diseases.

What are the symptoms of hepatitis A?

Older children and adults typically have symptoms. If symptoms develop, they can appear abruptly and can include:

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Dark urine
- Diarrhea
- Clay-colored stools
- Joint pain
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes)

How soon after exposure to hepatitis A will symptoms appear?

If symptoms occur, they usually start appearing 4 weeks



Contact your County Health Department

after exposure but they can occur as early as 2 weeks and as late as 7 weeks after exposure. Symptoms usually develop over a period of several days.

Can a person spread hepatitis A without having symptoms?

Yes. Many people, especially children, have no symptoms. In addition, a person can transmit the virus to others up to 2 weeks before any symptoms appear.

*Clients will not be charged a fee for the hepatitis A vaccine; however, if acceptable health insurance or Medicare is available, these plans will be billed.

COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENTS IN NORTH GEORGIA

Cherokee: (770) 345-7371
or (770) 928-0133

Fannin: (706) 632-3023
Gilmer: (706) 635-4363

Murray: (706) 695-4585

Pickens: (706) 253-2821

Whitfield: (706) 279-9600

More hepatitis A information is available at www.nghd.org

North Georgia
Health District

