



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

NICK LYON
DIRECTOR

August 1, 2017

TO: Healthcare Personnel, Hospital Infection Control & Prevention, Hospital Administration,
Local Health Department Medical Directors and Health Officers

**RE: GUIDANCE FOR PROTECTION OF HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL DURING AN
ONGOING HEPATITIS A VIRUS OUTBREAK IN SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN**

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommends standard precautions during patient care to protect healthcare personnel (HCP) against hepatitis A virus (HAV). HAV, like norovirus, is a non-enveloped virus, and it may be similarly difficult to inactivate in the environment. Alcohol-based hand rubs and typically-used surface disinfectants may not be effective. Therefore, additional recommended precautions include the following:

- Wash hands with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds after providing care for an HAV patient.
- Use contact precautions, in addition to standard precautions, in the care of HAV patients who are diapered or incontinent of stool.
- Wash hands with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds before eating and after using a restroom.
- Use employee-designated restrooms when available, and do not touch the door handle directly when exiting a restroom.
- Do not eat in patient care areas and never share food, drink or cigarettes with patients.
- Do not handle a cell phone just before (or while) eating. Studies have shown that cell phones have high rates of surface contamination with enteric organisms (and for hospital employees, organisms associated with hospital acquired infections).
- Perform environmental cleaning in areas housing HAV patients with bleach products or other products effective against norovirus.
- HAV vaccine should be available and encouraged for unvaccinated HCP caring for HAV patients or other unvaccinated HCP concerned about increased exposure to HAV during the outbreak

* Adapted from the California Health Alert Network issued on July 13, 2017 with permission of the San Diego County Health Department.

The ongoing hepatitis A outbreak in SE Michigan poses a significant public health threat to our most vulnerable community members and an increased risk to HCP caring for them. I encourage each hospital system involved in this outbreak to review infection control practices with Staff and determine the need to vaccinate HCP in discussion with local health department Medical Directors and Health Officers.

Sincerely,

Eden V. Wells, MD, MPH, FACPM
Chief Medical Executive
MDHHS