

HAN: Continued Increase in Hepatitis A Cases in Southeast Michigan Counties

Background

Public health officials and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) are continuing to see an elevated number of hepatitis A cases in the city of Detroit, and counties of Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne. From August 1, 2016 to March 21, 2017, 107 cases of lab-confirmed hepatitis A have been reported to public health authorities in these jurisdictions. This represents an eight-fold increase over the same time period last year. Ages of the cases range from 22 to 86 years, with a median age of 45.5 years; 70% of the cases are male. The percentage of cases hospitalized is 86%. Two deaths have been reported. Approximately one-third of the cases have a history of substance abuse; 15.6% of all cases are co-infected with hepatitis C. No common sources of infection have been identified.

Provider, Laboratory, and LHD Activities

Providers are asked to test any patients who present with symptoms compatible with an acute hepatitis A infection and to notify their local health department immediately when they have a patient they suspect may be infected. Close contacts of each case should be identified and assessed for post-exposure prophylaxis.

MDHHS continues to ask clinical laboratories in SE MI to report any positive hepatitis A IgM positive serum specimens to their local health department or through the Michigan Disease Surveillance System and to hold these specimens for two weeks in the event they are needed for additional testing at MDHHS.

Local health departments in SE MI are increasing their outreach to vulnerable populations to raise awareness and to promote vaccination. MDHHS encourages residents in the City of Detroit, Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne Counties to consider getting vaccinated for hepatitis A and advises that they talk to their healthcare provider about hepatitis A if they are interested.

Vaccination Information

Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable disease. While children and adolescents are recommended to receive the hepatitis A vaccine as part of the routine childhood vaccination regime, most adults have not been vaccinated and thus are susceptible to the hepatitis A virus.

Hepatitis A vaccination is recommended for:

- All children at age 1 year
- Close personal contacts (e.g., household, sexual) of hepatitis A patients
- Users of injection and non-injection illegal drugs

The Michigan Health Alert Network (MIHAN) is a secure, web-based communication system that was established by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of EMS, Trauma & Preparedness with guidance and funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The MIHAN serves to alert key public health, healthcare and public safety personnel of conditions that could adversely impact the health and safety of Michigan's citizens.



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- People with chronic (lifelong) liver diseases, such as hepatitis B or hepatitis C. Persons with chronic liver disease have an elevated risk of death from fulminant hepatitis A
- People who are treated with clotting-factor concentrates
- Travelers to countries that have high rates of hepatitis A
- Family members or caregivers of a recent adoptee from countries where hepatitis A is common

Symptoms of hepatitis A include jaundice, fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, and light-colored stools. The average incubation period for hepatitis A is 28 days with a range of 15–50 days. Individuals with hepatitis A are considered infectious for 2 weeks prior to symptom onset. Transmission of the illness occurs through fecal contamination, usually from close personal contact with an infected person. The hepatitis A virus can also be transmitted through contaminated food or water.

For more information on hepatitis A, please see <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/havfaq.htm#general>.

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