



October 28, 2016

## **HAN: Increased Hepatitis A Activity in Some Southeast Michigan Counties**

An increase in hepatitis A cases, an acute viral infection of the liver, has been detected in some counties of Southeast Michigan. Since August 2016, a total of 31 laboratory-confirmed cases of hepatitis A have been reported in Detroit City, Macomb, and Oakland Counties. This represents at least a sixfold increase in the number of cases seen during the same time period (August – October) in years 2012–2015. Ages of current cases range from 26 to 83 years with a median age of 46 years; 61% are males.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is working with local health departments and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to investigate the increase in cases. The onset of symptoms of a hepatitis A infection occurs abruptly. 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. Frequent and thorough handwashing with soap and water can help to protect against hepatitis A infection.

A vaccine to protect against hepatitis A infection has been available in the United States since 1995. The vaccine is very effective in preventing hepatitis A infection. It is recommended for all children at one year of age, people who are increased risk for infection, or persons at increased risk of complications from hepatitis A, and for anyone who wishes to obtain immunity.

Hepatitis A cases should be reported to your local health department within 24 hours. Individuals with hepatitis A should be asked if they have traveled to or taken any meals in southeast Michigan in the month prior to their illness onset. Laboratories are asked to hold hepatitis A IgM positive serum specimens for two weeks in the event they are needed for additional testing at MDHHS.

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

MDHHS Communicable Disease Division

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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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Thank you,  
Michigan Health Alert Network

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