



What You Should Know About Hepatitis A



What Is Hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a disease of the liver caused by the hepatitis A virus.

What are the Symptoms?

Symptoms of hepatitis A infection include fever, tiredness, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, stomach pain, yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice), dark urine, pale stools, and diarrhea. Some people may not feel sick but can still pass the disease to others.

How Serious are Hepatitis A Infections?

Almost all people with hepatitis A get better and do not have any lasting liver damage, although they may feel sick for several months. Hepatitis A can sometimes cause liver failure and death, although this is rare and occurs more often in people 50 years of age and older and in people with other liver diseases.

How Is It Spread?

A person can get hepatitis A through eating or drinking food contaminated with hepatitis A or by touching objects contaminated with hepatitis A. Contamination happens when an infected person does not wash his or her hands properly after going to the bathroom. Hepatitis A can also be transmitted during sexual contact with an infected person.

How Can I Protect Myself?

To prevent getting hepatitis A, you should:

- Get the hepatitis A vaccine. Go to www.vaccinefinder.org to find the nearest location.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after using the restroom and before eating or drinking.
- Use your own towels, toothbrushes, eating utensils, and other personal items.
- Not share food, drinks, or cigarettes with other people.

What are the Tests for Hepatitis A?

Talk to your medical provider if you think you have hepatitis A. He or she will ask about your symptoms and order a blood test.

How Is Hepatitis A Treated?

There is no specific treatment for hepatitis A. If you have hepatitis A, avoid drinking alcohol, get lots of rest, and drink plenty of fluids like water.

For More Information

Monterey County Health Department

Phone: 831-755-4521

www.mtyhd.org/hepA