

Hepatitis A Investigation – April 2017

Frequently Asked Questions

What you should know about the current situation

How do I know if I'm at risk?

You are at risk for hepatitis A infection if you have not previously been vaccinated against or had hepatitis A *and* you ate or drank at the Cup & Saucer cafe:

- North location at 8237 N. Denver Ave., Portland, between February 22nd and March 29th
 - If you ate or drank here from March 22 through March 29 you may still be in the time frame to get preventive care - usually a vaccine, depending on your age. Preventive care may be effective up to two weeks after your last visit to this location
 - If you ate or drank here from February 22 through March 21 you are past the time frame for preventive care. However, symptoms of Hepatitis A (see below) can occur up to 50 days after your last visit to this location. If you develop any of the symptoms described below, contact your health care provider, tell them your symptoms, and let them know you might have been exposed to Hepatitis A.
- Southeast location at 3566 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Portland, on March 22nd *or* March 25th
 - If you ate or drank here on these dates you are still in the time frame to get preventive care - usually vaccine, though that depends on your age. Preventive care may be effective up to two weeks after your visit to this location.

The Northeast location at 3000 NE Killingsworth is not affected.

What do I do if I'm at risk?

If you have been vaccinated for hepatitis A or have had hepatitis A illness in the past, your body will fight off any infection. You should be protected.

If it has been less than 2 weeks from the date you ate or drank at either of the impacted Cup & Saucer locations, AND you have not been vaccinated or had the hepatitis disease (or are unsure of either) the following is recommended:

- If you are between the ages of 1 to 40 years, you should receive single-antigen Hepatitis A vaccine. There is a child dose for those from age 1 to 18 and an adult dose for those 19 and older.
- If you are older than 40 years of age, you may receive single-antigen hepatitis A vaccine or immune globulin, depending on your provider's recommendation.
- If you have a child under 1 year old, they should receive immune globulin.
- If you have an impaired immune system or cannot receive the vaccine for medical reasons, you may be offered immune globulin.

What if I do not have a health care provider?

Some local pharmacies may carry the single-antibody hepatitis A vaccine. You can call your local pharmacy directly to find out about availability and cost.

What about my child who is younger than 12 months of age?

If your child who is younger than 12 months of age ate or drank at the Cup & Saucer Cafe on the above dates, please discuss follow up care with their provider. Typically we recommend that they receive immune globulin as preventive treatment for hepatitis A.

Can I receive hepatitis A vaccine if I am pregnant?

The safety of hepatitis A vaccination during pregnancy is not fully known. Please discuss the pros and cons of vaccination with your provider.

What if I'm not sure if I've received the vaccine before?

We recommend first checking with your provider to see if they have a record of your vaccination history. If you aren't able to get your records, it is not harmful to receive extra doses of vaccine. It would be better to receive additional vaccine than none at all, if you are not sure if you have been vaccinated in the past. If you have other concerns, call the Multnomah County Communicable Disease Services hotline at 503-988-4454. Messages left on the hotline will be returned within one business day.

Other information about hepatitis A and preventive treatment

How is hepatitis A passed from person to person (transmitted)?

Hepatitis A is highly contagious. People become infected by swallowing the virus, which is present in the feces of an ill person. It can spread from person to person by inadequate handwashing after using the toilet or changing diapers, or eating food prepared by an infected person. It can also be passed by sexual contact. People can be infected by as few as 10 tiny virus particles. Hepatitis A is not spread by saliva.

A person can spread the disease without realizing it. A person with hepatitis A may also spread the disease up to two weeks before they become ill with symptoms.

How long can someone with hepatitis A infect other people?

Hepatitis A can be passed to other people starting about 2 weeks before symptoms develop. It can continue to be passed to other people for 2 weeks after symptoms begin.

How long does hepatitis A stay in the body?

After infection with hepatitis A, symptoms do not show up for at least 15 days and sometimes do not show up for as long as 50 days. The average time before symptoms show up is 30 days.

If I get sick from hepatitis A, how will I know?

Most of the time, the sickness of hepatitis A has a sudden onset. If you become sick, you may develop fever, lack of appetite, nausea, fatigue or abdominal pain. A few days after these symptoms, skin and sometimes the whites of eyes can become yellow, urine may become dark, and stools may become pale. Sometimes people have no symptoms and sometimes the symptoms can be fairly severe. The older you are, the more often the symptoms will show (80-90% of adults will show symptoms). Children younger than 6 will often have few or no symptoms.

If I get infected or think I might be infected, should I go to work or school?

If you become sick or think you are infected, you should **not** go to work or other public places that including school, day-care, food serving or preparation work, or healthcare work.

If I get infected or think I might be infected, how long should I stay out of work or school?

It is recommended you discuss this with your healthcare provider. In general, however, be aware of your employer's policy on sick leave and follow it. If you think you might be infected, it is important you see your healthcare provider to confirm a diagnosis.

If I have had hepatitis A before, can I get it again?

If you have been infected with hepatitis A in the past, your body has made antibodies against it which give you lifelong protection. This means that you cannot get sick again from hepatitis A.

Where can I find additional information about hepatitis A, the vaccine, and other preventive treatment?

<https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/afaq.htm>