

Hepatitis A

Fact Sheet



What is Hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A Virus (HAV) is a highly contagious virus that causes liver swelling and damage.

Symptoms

Symptoms may appear 2-7 weeks after exposure to the virus. Adults are more likely to have symptoms than children.

These can include:

- **Jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes)**
- **Fever**
- **Diarrhea**
- **Vomiting**
- **Dark urine or light-colored stools**
- **Upset stomach**
- **Fatigue**
- **Joint pain**

Prevention

To reduce risk, wash your hands after using the toilet, changing a diaper, and before eating or preparing food. Hepatitis A can be prevented with a vaccine for those eligible. Individuals traveling internationally or those with existing liver disease are at higher risk. **Talk to your doctor about vaccination.**

How is it spread?

The virus is highly contagious and can survive on surfaces for months. Tiny, microscopic amounts of infected stool can spread through close person-to-person contact or contaminated food, drink, and surfaces. **If you are a food service worker, health care worker, or daycare worker, you must report the illness to your employer.**

Treatment

There is no specific treatment for HAV. Most people recover fully within several weeks. If you have been exposed to a person with HAV, you may be eligible for vaccination or immune globulin if given within two weeks.

