

St. Clair County Health Department Hepatitis A - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- 1. How can I get my hepatitis A vaccine?** The hepatitis A vaccine is available on a walk-in basis every Monday from 10:00am – 6:00pm, while supplies last, at the main office located at 3415 28th Street in Port Huron. Appointments are available for Tuesday through Friday by calling (810) 987-5300. The following offsite hepatitis A vaccine clinics will be from 10:00am - 6:30pm. Offsite clinics are open to all adults aged 18 and older.
 - January 3, 2018 – Mussey Township Fire Hall at 550 W. Mill St. in Capac
 - January 10, 2018 – Fort Gratiot Township Hall at 3720 Keewahdin Rd. in Fort Gratiot
 - January 11, 2018 – Pine Shores Golf Club at 515 Fred W. Moore Hwy. in St. Clair
 - January 17, 2018 – McMorran Place in the Memorial Room at 701 McMorran Blvd. in Port Huron
- 2. What is the cost of the vaccine?** Many insurances cover the cost of the hepatitis A vaccine. For those who are uninsured or underinsured, vaccine is available from the St. Clair County Health Department at no cost.
- 3. What are the latest updates?** Southeast Michigan has been experiencing a hepatitis A outbreak since August 2016. For the most up to date information on the outbreak, including St. Clair County case counts, please visit www.michigan.gov/hepatitisAoutbreak.
- 4. What is hepatitis A?** Hepatitis A is a liver disease caused by hepatitis A virus (HAV).
- 5. What are the signs and symptoms of hepatitis A?** Some people with hepatitis A do not have any symptoms. If you do have symptoms, they may include the following:
 - Fever
 - Throwing up/vomiting
 - Pale-colored stools/poop
 - Feeling tired
 - Stomach pain
 - Yellow skin or eyes
 - Not hungry
 - Dark urine/pee
- 6. How is hepatitis A transmitted?** Hepatitis A is usually spread when the hepatitis A virus is taken in by mouth from contact with objects, food, or drinks contaminated by the feces (or stool/poop) of an infected person. A person can get hepatitis A through:
 - Person to person contact
 - When an infected person does not wash his or her hands properly after going to the bathroom and touches other objects or food
 - When a parent or caregiver does not properly wash his or her hands after changing diapers or cleaning up the stool of an infected person
 - When someone has sex or sexual contact with an infected person. (not limited to anal-oral contact)
 - Contaminated food or water
 - Hepatitis A can be spread by eating or drinking food or water contaminated with the virus. (This can include frozen or undercooked food.) This is more likely to occur in countries where hepatitis A is common and in areas where there are poor sanitary conditions or poor personal hygiene. The food and drinks most likely to be contaminated are fruits, vegetables, shellfish, ice, and water. In the United States, chlorination of water kills hepatitis A virus that enters the water supply.

- 7. What is the Incubation period for hepatitis A?** A person is contagious 2 weeks before they show symptoms. The incubation period for hepatitis A is 15 days-50 days and getting the vaccine is a very effective way to prevent getting sick.
- 8. How is the hepatitis A vaccine given?** The hepatitis A vaccine is given as 2 shots, 6 months apart. One shot is highly effective, approximately 95%.
- 9. Is the hepatitis A vaccine effective?** Yes, the hepatitis A vaccine is highly effective in preventing hepatitis A virus infection. Protection begins approximately 2 to 4 weeks after the first injection. A second injection results in long-term protection.
- 10. Is the hepatitis A vaccine safe?** Yes, the hepatitis A vaccine is safe. No serious side effects have resulted from the hepatitis A vaccine. Soreness at the injection site is the most common side effect reported. As with any medicine, there are very small risks that a serious problem could occur after someone gets the vaccine. However, the potential risks associated with hepatitis A are much greater than the potential risks associated with the hepatitis A vaccine. Before the hepatitis A vaccine became available in the United States, more than 250,000 people were infected with hepatitis A virus each year. Since the licensure of the first hepatitis A vaccine in 1995, millions of doses of hepatitis A vaccine have been given in the United States and worldwide.
- 11. Who should get vaccinated against hepatitis A?** Hepatitis A vaccination is recommended for:
- All children at age 1 year
 - 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
 - Men who have sexual contact with other men
 - Users of injection and non-injection illegal drugs
 - People with chronic (lifelong) liver diseases, such as hepatitis B or hepatitis C
 - People who are treated with clotting-factor concentrates
 - People who work with hepatitis A infected animals or in a hepatitis A research laboratory
 - All persons who want to be safe from the hepatitis A virus may be vaccinated
- 12. Who should not receive the hepatitis A vaccine?** People who have ever had a serious allergic reaction to the hepatitis A vaccine or who are known to be allergic to any part of the hepatitis A vaccine should not receive the vaccine. Tell your doctor if you have any severe allergies. If you have had hepatitis A virus in the past, you do not need the vaccine. Also, the vaccine is not licensed for use in infants under age 1 year.
- 13. What are local reactions that might occur after the administration of hepatitis A vaccine?** No serious adverse reactions normally occur. Some people report soreness at the injection site and/or headache.
- 14. I am not sure if I have previously had the hepatitis A vaccine, is it safe to get again?** If you have been previously vaccinated, you do not need the hepatitis A vaccine. But, if you do not know if you've had the vaccine, receiving it again will not increase risk or side effects of the vaccine.