

FACT SHEET: HEPATITIS A

Hepatitis A is a contagious liver infection caused by the hepatitis A virus.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Symptoms start 15 to 50 days (usually 28 days) from the time you were exposed to the virus. The first symptoms of infection may include:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Upset stomach
- Dark pee, pale poop (greyish colour)
- Loss of appetite
- Jaundice (yellow skin or yellow whites of eyes)
- Stomach cramps
- Nausea

Symptoms usually last less than 2 months, but for some people symptoms last 6 months.

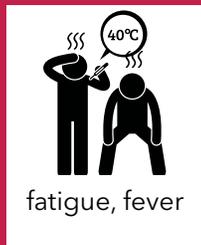
HOW IS IT SPREAD?

Hepatitis A spreads from person to person through contact with a sick person's poop, through sexual contact with a sick person, or through eating or drinking something contaminated with the virus.

HOW LONG ARE PEOPLE CONTAGIOUS?

A person with hepatitis A is contagious from two weeks before symptoms start to one week after jaundice (or two weeks after symptoms started if there is no jaundice).

KNOW THE SYMPTOMS OF HEPATITIS A



continued ...

Hepatitis A

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WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE BEEN AROUND SOMEONE WITH HEPATITIS A?

- Talk to your healthcare provider.
- If you've never had hepatitis A vaccine or infection, you may need the vaccine.
- Don't share items that go in the mouth such as cigarettes, cups, etc.
- If you are having sex with an infected person, use a condom.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE HEPATITIS A?

- Talk to your healthcare provider, a blood test is needed to make the diagnosis.
- Clean your hands often.
- Don't make food for other people.
- Clean and disinfect your washroom and other items touched often.
- Let other people know about your infection if you have shared items with them, slept in the same bed as them, lived with them or prepared food for them.

HOW IT CAN BE PREVENTED

1. Get the hepatitis A vaccine

The hepatitis A vaccine is free for people who:

- Live with someone with hepatitis A
- Has sex with someone with hepatitis A
- Use intravenous drugs
- Have a chronic liver disease such as hepatitis B or C
- Men who have sex with men

For full protection, you need 2 doses of hepatitis A vaccine, 6 months apart from one another.

2. Don't share drugs or drug equipment and supplies or anything that has been in someone else's mouth

3. Have safe sex (use condoms and dental dams)

4. Wash your hands often

5. Clean and disinfect your bathroom often

Use bleach and water to disinfect. Hepatitis A can live on surfaces outside the body for months.

**TO REDUCE
YOUR RISK:**



wash your hands



don't share



get vaccinated!

MORE INFORMATION



Southwestern Public Health

St. Thomas Site

519-631-9900

Woodstock Site

519-421-9901

1-800-922-0096 | www.swpublichealth.ca