



# Southeastern Michigan Health Association

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Executive Director

## **Southeast Michigan Hepatitis A Outbreak**

Joint Press Release from Local Health Officers

DETROIT, Dec. 11, 2017 – Since 2016, health departments across Southeast Michigan have mounted a strong effort to combat the Hepatitis A outbreak in the region. The outbreak is predominantly impacting Southeast Michigan, which includes Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw and Wayne Counties, and the City of Detroit. This joint release highlights key information and expanded opportunities for hepatitis A vaccination.

- Each of the impacted health departments is offering greatly expanded opportunities for hepatitis A vaccination, including evening hours and multiple community locations.
- People who prepare food or beverages for others, such as those who work in food service or restaurants are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated. This is a priority because of the potential for spreading illness to large numbers of people rapidly, not necessarily increased risk of becoming ill.
- State and local officials are also working to vaccinate healthcare workers, first responders and police departments, to protect the public and prevent illness from impacting critical municipal functions
- As communities, families, and friends come together for the holidays, there is an increased risk of exposure to hepatitis A. The best protection for you and your family is the hepatitis A vaccination.
- Over 82% of people infected are becoming sick enough to require hospitalization. For this reason, the health officers are urging residents to contact their local health departments if they believe they have been infected.

### **Hepatitis A Vaccination**

The hepatitis A vaccine is very effective at preventing infection. Many people can get the vaccine from their health care provider. While anyone who wants to obtain the vaccine should be vaccinated, state and local health officials are recommending the following high-risk individuals obtain the vaccine:

- Persons who are homeless.
- Persons who are incarcerated.
- Persons who use injection and non-injection illegal drugs.
- Persons who work with the high risk populations listed above.
- Persons who have close contact, care for, or live with someone who has HAV.
- Persons who have sexual activities with someone who has HAV.
- Men who have sex with men.

- Travelers to countries with high or medium rates of HAV.
- Persons with chronic liver disease, such as cirrhosis, hepatitis B, or hepatitis C.
- Persons with clotting factor disorders.

People without insurance or who cannot get it elsewhere can get vaccinated through their local health department.

**Detroit Health Department**

313-876-4000

<http://www.detroitmi.gov/health> or @DetHealth

Media contact: Tamekia Ashford, 313-400-7107 or [AshfordTa@detroitmi.gov](mailto:AshfordTa@detroitmi.gov)

**Livingston County Health Department**

517-546-9850

[www.lchd.org](http://www.lchd.org) or [www.facebook.com/LCDPH](http://www.facebook.com/LCDPH)

Media contact: Chelsea Moxlow, 517-546-9850 or [cmoxlow@livgov.com](mailto:cmoxlow@livgov.com)

**Macomb County Health Department**

586-469-5372 (Mount Clemens)

586-465-8537 (Warren)

<http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-FamilyHealthServices-ImmunizationClinic> or @PublicHealthMacomb

Media contact: William Ridella, 586-469-5510 or [bill.ridella@macombgov.org](mailto:bill.ridella@macombgov.org)

**Monroe County Health Department**

734-240-7800

<http://www.co.monroe.mi.us/publichealth> or @Monroe-County-Health-Department

Media contact: Kim Comerzan, 734-240-7804 or [kim\\_comerzan@monroemi.org](mailto:kim_comerzan@monroemi.org)

**Oakland County Health Division**

248-848-5533 (Nurse on Call)

[www.oakgov.com/health](http://www.oakgov.com/health) or @publichealthOC

Media contact: Leigh-Anne Stafford, 248-858-1410 or [health@oakgov.com](mailto:health@oakgov.com)

**St. Clair County Health Department**

810-987-5300

[www.scchealth.co](http://www.scchealth.co) or @scchdmi

Media contact: Jennifer Michaluk, (810) 987-5300 or [jmichaluk@stclaircounty.org](mailto:jmichaluk@stclaircounty.org)

**Washtenaw County Health Department**

734-544-6700

<http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org> or @wcpublichealth

Media contact: Susan Cerniglia, 734-544-6759 or [ringlers@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:ringlers@ewashtenaw.org)

## **Wayne County Health Department**

734-727-7101

<https://www.waynecounty.com/departments/hvcw/wellness/protect-yourself-from-hepatitis-a.aspx>

Media contact: Lisa Croff, 313-657-8630 or [lcroff@waynecounty.com](mailto:lcroff@waynecounty.com)

### **The Southeast Michigan Hepatitis A Outbreak**

The Southeast Michigan hepatitis A outbreak appears to be spreading from person-to-person and through illicit drug use. Among the eight Southeast Michigan health departments, 551 cases have been confirmed since August 2016, which represents 95% of the total outbreak cases statewide. It can be spread through close contact, such as living with or having sex with someone who has hepatitis A. Hepatitis A is also easily transmitted by consuming food or beverages handled by someone infected with the virus. Infected persons can be contagious for up to two weeks before showing any symptoms. Vaccination and handwashing can prevent the spread of illness.

Hepatitis A is an infection of the liver caused by a virus. Symptoms of infection may include sudden abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea, headache, dark urine, and/or vomiting often followed by yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice). Symptoms may appear from 14-50 days after exposure, but average about one month.

To reduce your risk of hepatitis A:

- Get the hepatitis A vaccine.
- Know the signs and symptoms of the disease.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Do not prepare food if you are sick.
- Stay home from work and report illness to your employer.

Learn more about the Southeast Michigan hepatitis A outbreak, including the current number of cases and information for at-risk groups and food service workers, at [www.mi.gov/hepatitisaoutbreak](http://www.mi.gov/hepatitisaoutbreak).

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