

Preventing the Spread

Thoroughly wash your hands with soap under warm running water:

- AFTER using or cleaning the toilet
- AFTER touching anything contaminated by diarrhoea or vomit
- AFTER attending to anybody who is unwell
- AFTER handling dirty laundry, clothing or bedding
- BEFORE handling, preparing, serving or consuming food or drink
- AFTER touching animals during visits to farms, wildlife parks, zoos, pet' corners, etc

Also:

- AVOID eating raw and undercooked shellfish such as oysters, mussels etc
- AVOID swimming in potentially contaminated water
- ONLY drink water from safe sources
- Drink bottled water (with a seal) when travelling to parts of the world where the drinking water may be of poor standard
- BY being vaccinated if you are travelling abroad to a country which has a higher incidence of Hepatitis A than the UK – your GP or practice nurse will advise you about this

If you have any questions please contact the Infection Prevention & Control Nurses: 09:00 to 17:00hrs, Monday to Friday

Lister Hospital: 01438 314333 Ext 5383

www.enher-ts-tr.nhs.uk

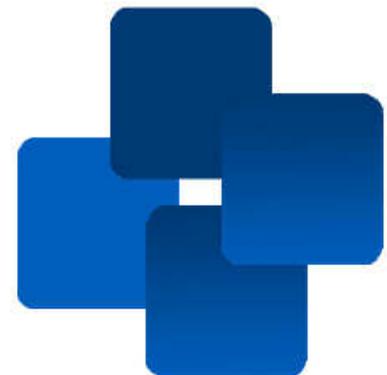
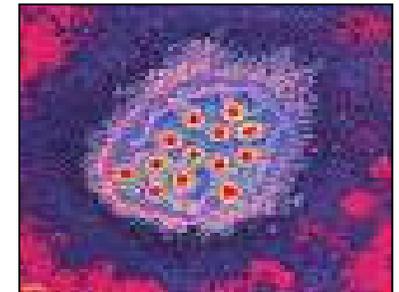
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Hepatitis A

Patient and visitor information leaflet

Please follow this guidance from the Infection Prevention and Control Team



What is Hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a liver infection caused by a virus. It is only found in humans and other primates. Hepatitis A, a virus infection causes a range of illnesses from mild non specific nausea and vomiting through to Hepatitis and, rarely, liver failure. Hepatitis A virus was a common childhood infection in the early 20th Century but now in the 21st Century it is an unusual infection in the UK. It is normally spread by the faecal-oral route but can also be spread occasionally through blood.

What are the symptoms?

It is a type of virus which may cause:

- Nausea and vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea
- Fever
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Dark coloured urine
- Sometimes jaundice - yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes.

Often a person, (especially children) may not have any signs or symptoms of the disease. The older the person the more severe the symptoms.

How is Hepatitis A diagnosed?

Hepatitis A can only be confirmed by a laboratory test.

How is it spread?

The Hepatitis A virus is found in the faeces of someone infected with the virus. It only takes a tiny amount of faeces getting inside another person's mouth to cause Hepatitis A infection.

How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?

The incubation period of the virus before symptoms develop is between two to six weeks.

For how long is a person able to spread the virus?

The Hepatitis A virus is shed in the faeces of an infected person for two weeks before symptoms occur, during the first week of illness and for one week after the start of any jaundice.

Hepatitis A vaccine

Vaccination can be used to prevent groups at high risk, including, people who have been in contact with someone else who has the infection, travellers to countries where the infection is common and other groups such as injecting drug users.

For this reason the virus is more easily spread in areas of the world where there are poor sanitary conditions or in circumstances where good personal hygiene is not observed. Infections can result from contact with a household member or sexual partner who already has the Hepatitis A infection. It can also be caught from contaminated food and water, e.g., raw or undercooked, contaminated shell fish and from drinking water when travelling abroad.

Do you need to stay off work or school?

YES - for seven days after the start of symptoms, e.g., jaundice. If you work as a food handler, with young children or in healthcare, you must inform your employer and/or seek advice from your local Environmental Health Department.