



"Partnering to promote, protect and preserve health in our community."

HEALTH ALERT NETWORK HEALTH DISTRICT 4

HEPATITIS A ADVISORY FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Central District Health Department Urges Health Care Providers to Watch
for Hepatitis A

February 26, 2019

Since the first of the year, six hepatitis A cases have been reported among Ada and Elmore County residents. Typically, 1-2 cases are reported in an entire calendar year. All reported cases have been men between the ages of 30 and 60. Only one reported out-of-state travel during the most likely exposure period. No common risk factors for illness have been found.

Hepatitis A virus is typically spread person-to-person through fecal-oral transmission. Older children and adults usually develop jaundice, but young children are often asymptomatic. The average incubation period for hepatitis A is 28 days with a range of 15-50 days, and most cases are self-limited.

Symptoms and Laboratory Testing

Hepatitis A diagnosis is based on a discrete onset of symptoms consistent with hepatitis (e.g., nausea, anorexia, fever, malaise, or abdominal pain) AND jaundice and/or elevated serum alanine aminotransferase (ALT) or aspartate aminotransferase (AST) levels. The symptoms of hepatitis A are indistinguishable from those caused by other types of acute viral hepatitis.

Recommended testing includes liver function testing and acute viral hepatitis testing with hepatitis A IgM, hepatitis B core IgM, hepatitis B surface antigen, and hepatitis C antibody. Please note, hepatitis A total antibody does not distinguish acute infection from past infection or immunity, so it is not recommended.

Prevention

Although routine vaccination for hepatitis A is always recommended for anyone who wants to prevent infection, exposed individuals will not benefit from prophylaxis unless the vaccine or immunoglobulin is given within 14 days of exposure. Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/havfaq.htm#protection> to view the current hepatitis A post-exposure prophylaxis guidelines.

Please contact Communicable Disease Control at (208) 327-8625 to report suspect and confirmed cases of hepatitis A.

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