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## JOINT HEALTH UPDATE ALAMEDA COUNTY AND CITY OF BERKELEY

# HEPATITIS A

## Guidance for Healthcare Facilities and Clinicians

March 21, 2018

There now appears to be sufficient hepatitis A vaccine supply for people in high-risk categories such those experiencing homelessness and those using illicit drugs, as well as other risk categories and anyone seeking protection from hepatitis A disease. All at-risk individuals should receive the vaccine and decisions to broaden the use of hepatitis A vaccine should be based on your health care facility or organization's own inventory.

As of March 21, 2018, Alameda County and City of Berkeley do *not* have reported cases associated with the ongoing hepatitis A outbreak, which has affected those experiencing homelessness or using illicit drugs (both injectable and non-injectable) in San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Cruz and Monterey counties. The vigilance and actions of providers and partners is critical to prevent a hepatitis A outbreak in our jurisdictions. Please continue to:

- BE AWARE of hepatitis A symptoms
- ASK about hepatitis A risk factors
- VACCINATE all individuals in risk groups for hepatitis A disease
- REPORT all suspected and confirmed hepatitis A cases immediately to the Public Health Department

### **Background, Situation Update and Vaccine Supply**

With at least 700 reported cases to date in California, this is the largest person-to-person (not related to a common source or contaminated food product) **hepatitis A outbreak** since the hepatitis A vaccine became available in 1996. California declared a **State of Emergency** in October 2017.

**Outbreaks of hepatitis A** have occurred in San Diego, Santa Cruz, Los Angeles, and most recently in Monterey County in persons who are homeless and/or using illicit drugs. Outbreak associated case counts from California counties are posted at

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Hepatitis-A-Outbreak.aspx>

A high demand of single antigen hepatitis A vaccine resulted in a national vaccine shortage toward the end of 2017. Currently, issues with single antigen vaccine supply and ordering appear to be resolved. Medical providers should now be vaccinating based on their own inventory instead of trying to ration or prioritize hepatitis A vaccine. The combined hepatitis A and B vaccine, Twinrix®, continues to be widely available as well.

### **Situation in Alameda County including the City of Berkeley (as of 3/20/18):**

- No hepatitis A cases linked to outbreaks in San Diego, Santa Cruz, Los Angeles or Monterey.
- No evidence of hepatitis A outbreaks in the county.
- 8 cases in Alameda County and no cases in City of Berkeley reported this year (2018) to date.
- In addition to receiving vaccines through primary care, vaccination campaigns were launched in both the [City of Berkeley](#) and [Alameda County](#) to protect those experiencing homelessness and others in specific risk groups. Vaccination efforts will continue through April 2018. These efforts have primarily been through mobile health clinic services and hepatitis A vaccination clinics associated with homeless shelters, needle exchange sites and churches. Anyone interested in expanding or participating in supplemental vaccination efforts should please call 510-267-3230 in Alameda County or 510-981-5300 in the City of Berkeley.

### **Vaccination**

Medical providers should order sufficient inventory to meet their patients' needs.

Administer hepatitis A vaccine to any person exposed to a case of hepatitis A (household/sexual contact) and continue to vaccinate all persons in the following risk groups:

- Persons currently experiencing homelessness
- Persons using illicit drugs
- Men who have sex with men
- Persons with chronic liver disease
- Persons traveling to or working in [countries where hepatitis A is common](#)

~ Consider using combined hepatitis A/B vaccine ([Twinrix®](#)) if patient is in a group recommended for hepatitis B preventive vaccination as well. ~

In addition to vaccinating all patients in the above risk groups, consider vaccinating persons with close contact to individuals in high risk groups listed above. This can include:

1. Employees who provide direct clinical and/or social services to homeless people and active drug users whose work entails physical contact with the individual.
2. Employees who are environmental workers that are charged with clean-up and inspectional services in areas occupied by homeless people and/or active drug users.
3. Employees who are food handlers in venues that serve homeless people and/or active drug users.
4. Employees that are first responders (EMS, Fire and Sheriff) with direct contact with homeless individuals and/or active drug users.

Finally, if your vaccine inventory is sufficient, vaccinate anyone seeking protection from hepatitis A disease.

**Immediately report** suspected and confirmed acute hepatitis A cases in persons experiencing homelessness or using illicit drugs by calling ACPHD at 510-267-3250, M-F 8:30a-5p, or after hours at Alameda County Dispatch, 925-422-7595. For Berkeley residents only, contact the Berkeley Communicable Disease program at 510-981-5292. For other acute hepatitis A cases in persons without the above risk factors, report within one working day of identification either by telephone or by fax (ACPHD 510-273-3744; Berkeley 510-981-5345).

### **Other Prevention/Hygiene & Infection Control recommendations:**

Hepatitis A virus (HAV) is transmitted by the fecal-oral route. HAV is hardy in the environment, can live for months outside the human body, and is difficult to inactivate. Ensure appropriate cleaning of HAV patient areas with a hospital grade cleaner/disinfectant effective against hepatitis A. *Waterless hand sanitizers are not effective.* Ensure healthcare personnel practice proper hand hygiene with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after patient care, before and after eating, and after using the restroom. Standard precautions should be used in health care settings when caring for continent patients with confirmed or suspected hepatitis A infection. Contact and Standard precautions should be used in health care settings in the care of diapered or incontinent HAV patients.

### **Resources:**

CA DPH has issued several alerts and advisories since October 2017

- [Provider Alert: Immunize Men Who Have Sex with Men \(December 1, 2017\)](#)(PDF)
- [Preventing Hep A in Non-medical Facilities \(October 25, 2017\)](#)(PDF)
- [Hepatitis A Outbreak: Updated Clinical Guidance \(October 19, 2017\)](#)(PDF)
- [All Facilities Letter \(October 17, 2017\)](#)
- [Proclamation State of Emergency \(October 13, 2017\)](#)
- [Press Release \(October 13, 2017\)](#)

Additional resources include:

- Alameda County Public Health Department – Hepatitis A: <http://www.acphd.org/hepa.aspx>
- City of Berkeley Public Health Department:  
[https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Health\\_Human\\_Services/Public\\_Health/Hepatitis\\_A\\_Outbreak.aspx](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Health_Human_Services/Public_Health/Hepatitis_A_Outbreak.aspx)
- CDPH Hepatitis A website:  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Hepatitis-A.aspx>
- CDPH Hepatitis A Outbreak website:  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Hepatitis-A-Outbreak.aspx>
- CDPH All Facilities Summary Letter (10/17/17):  
<https://www.calhospital.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/afl-17-21.pdf>
- CDPH Postexposure Prophylaxis guidance:  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/Immunization/HepatitisA-PEPQuicksheet.pdf>
- CDC Hepatitis A: <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/index.htm>
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/outbreaks/2017March-HepatitisA.htm>