

Hepatitis A

What you should know



What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a contagious, short-term infection. Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver, which sorts out nutrients, filters the blood and fights infections. When it's inflamed, it can't do its job well. Heavy alcohol use, toxins, and some drugs and health conditions can cause other forms of hepatitis.

Who is most at risk?

Persons most at risk of hepatitis A are those who:

- Have sex with infected persons
- Live with or care for someone who has the virus
- Use drugs or share needles
- Are homeless
- Travel to counties where the virus is common



Persons with liver disease or HIV are at a higher risk of serious complications from hepatitis A.

What are some symptoms?

If symptoms happen, they often show up 2 to 7 weeks after infection. They can last for 2 to 6 months and include:

- Yellow skin or eyes
- Fever
- Dark urine or light colored stools
- Not wanting to eat
- Upset stomach/diarrhea
- Feeling tired



Adults and teens are more likely to have symptoms than young children. Most adults who get the virus get better without lasting liver damage. In rare cases, hepatitis A can cause liver failure and death.

How is it spread?

Hepatitis A is found in the stool and blood of infected people and spread when someone ingests it. This often happens through person-to-person contact, sexual contact or eating tainted food or drink.

How is hepatitis A treated?

A doctor can tell if you have the virus by checking your symptoms and a blood test. Doctors often suggest rest, a good diet and fluids to treat it. Some people will need medical care in a hospital.



Learn more.

Visit [FloridaHealth.gov/HepA](https://www.FloridaHealth.gov/HepA),
[CDC.gov/Hepatitis](https://www.CDC.gov/Hepatitis) or
[Immunize.org/Hepatitis-A](https://www.Immunize.org/Hepatitis-A).

How can I protect myself?

Talk to your doctor about getting vaccinated. A single shot of the hepatitis A vaccine can help stop the virus if given within two weeks of contact. Two doses of the vaccine are often needed, spaced at least six months apart.

You may get a free or low-cost vaccine by contacting:

- Your county health department
- Member Services at 1-844-406-2396 for Florida Medicaid, 1-877-440-3738 for Long-Term Care or TTY 711, who will check if you're eligible to get it at a Simple network pharmacy
- The Florida Hepatitis A Information Line
 - Call toll free: 1-844-CALL-DOH (844-225-5364), Monday to Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

You can stay virus-free by washing your hands often with soap and warm water. Wash them after using the bathroom, changing diapers and caring for someone ill as well as before preparing and eating food. Hand sanitizers do not kill the virus.



Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/pdfs/HepAGeneralFactSheet.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/Populations/PDFs/HepGay-FactSheet.pdf>

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/liver-disease/viral-hepatitis/hepatitis-a#likely>

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/vaccine-preventable-disease/hepatitis-a/index.html>



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Do you need help with your health care, talking with us, or reading what we send you? Call us toll free at 1-844-406-2396 for Florida Medicaid, 1-877-440-3738 for Long-Term Care or TTY 711 to get this for free in other languages or formats.

¿Necesita ayuda con su cuidado de la salud, para hablar con nosotros o leer lo que le enviamos? Llámenos a la línea gratuita al 1-844-406-2396 para Florida Medicaid, 1-877-440-3738 para Long-Term Care o TTY 711 para recibir esto gratuitamente en otros idiomas o formatos.

Èske ou bezwen èd ak swen sante ou, èd pou pale ak nou, oswa pou li sa nou voye ba ou? Rele nou gratis nan 1-844-406-2396 pou Florida Medicaid, 1-877-440-3738 pou Long-Term Care oswa TTY 711 pou w jwenn sa gratis nan lòt lang oswa nan lòt fòm.