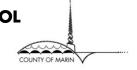


## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Marinhhs.org





# **Hepatitis A**

| Your child may have been exposed to this disease on     |                      |  |
|---|----------------------|--|
| •   | Date(s)              |  |
| Please watch your child for symptoms through            | •                    |  |
|   | Date                 |  |
| If your child has symptoms, please contact your child's | healthcare provider. |  |

If my child has this disease, when can he or she return to school or child care?

Children may not return to school until it has been at least 7 days after jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes) or other symptoms of Hepatitis A appeared.

**Hepatitis A is a virus that infects the liver.** It usually does not cause symptoms in young children. Older children and adults are more likely to show symptoms. Symptoms are:

- Stomach pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Fever
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes)
- Clay colored stool
- Dark urine (tea color)

Symptoms usually start 15 to 30 days after a person is exposed to the virus, but it can take up to 50 days.

#### How is Hepatitis A spread?

- The virus can live in small, undetected amounts of stool from an infected person. Hands, objects, food, or drinks comes into contact with the stool and virus. Then a person unknowingly swallows the virus from the infected hand, objects, food, or drinks.
- This happens when a person does not wash his hands well after using the bathroom or changing a diaper and then touches items or food.
- Drinking or eating water or food (often shellfish) with the virus in it.

A sick person can spread the virus beginning 2 weeks before symptoms start until 1 week after symptoms first appear.

#### What can I do now?

If your child has not been vaccinated or had this disease previously, you can prevent your child from becoming sick by getting the vaccine or Hepatitis A immune globulin within 2 weeks of the exposure. Talk to your child's doctor for more information. The majority of children are vaccinated for Hepatitis A before turning two years old.

Watch your child for symptoms of this disease. Call your child's doctor or health care provider if your child is sick. Encourage a sick child to rest and drink fluids. Talk to your doctor before giving your child any prescription, over-thecounter, or herbal medications that may damage the liver, such as Tylenol.

### If your child gets sick, prevent others from getting ill by:

- Washing hands frequently with soap and water, such as after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and before preparing food.
- Keeping your child at home until at least 7 days after the jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes) appeared.
- Clean objects such as toys after they have had contact with body fluids, such as saliva or urine.