



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-the-counter, 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.