



# Hepatitis A

## What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable liver disease. It is usually caused by a virus in the liver. Your liver fights infections, processes nutrients and filters blood.

## How is hepatitis A spread?

- Usually by accidentally ingesting stool (poop) –even in microscopic amounts– from an infected person.
- You can get the hepatitis A virus by touching objects, surfaces, foods or drinks with the virus on them.
- It's not possible to kill the hepatitis A virus by freezing or heating it.
- Hepatitis A is often spread through close personal contact (sex, caregiving).

## People at high risk include:

- People in direct contact with someone infected with the virus
- Men who have sex with men
- People who use street drugs (injected or not)
- People who are in prison
- People experiencing homelessness
- People who have traveled to other areas with a hepatitis A outbreak

## What are the symptoms?

Adults are more likely to show symptoms than children. Symptoms usually last less than 2 months, but some people can be sick for up to 6 months.

- Fever
- Tiredness
- Not hungry
- Stomach pain
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Dark urine (pee)
- Gray stool (poop)
- Joint pain
- Jaundice (yellow skin or eyes)

## How can I protect myself and my family?

- Always wash your hands after using the bathroom and before touching food.
- Get the hepatitis A vaccine.

## Who should be vaccinated?

- Children when they turn one year old
- Travelers to countries where hepatitis A is common
- Family and caregivers from countries where hepatitis A is common
- Men who have sex with men
- People who use recreational drugs
- People with chronic or long-term liver disease
- People with clotting-factor disorders (hemophilia)