

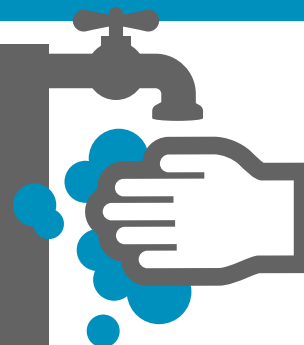
HEPATITIS A

A VIRUS SPREAD MOSTLY BY DIRTY HANDS

Vaccination is the best defense against this disease.

What is hepatitis A?

- ✓ Hepatitis A is a highly contagious virus that attacks the liver.
- ✓ The disease spreads through fecal matter, even tiny amounts, from an infected person. You can catch the virus when you eat or drink something that person touched with unwashed hands.



Treatment

- ✓ Bed rest, fluids, and healthy food.
- ✓ Doctors treat only the symptoms, which may last a few weeks to 6 months. The liver usually heals.



Be Wise — Immunize

- 2 shots for kids (at 1 year and 6-12 months later) give full protection.
- At-risk adults also can get the shots. Those most at risk are 30 and older, unvaccinated, and traveling where hepatitis A is common.



Since 1995 (when the vaccine became available), hepatitis A rates have dropped by more than **95%**. But for those who aren't vaccinated, one bad visit to a restaurant can make you really sick.

Talk to your doctor if you have questions about hepatitis A, or think you may be at risk.

Symptoms and complications

Symptoms may appear 2-6 weeks after contact with the virus.

- ✓ Fatigue, fever, joint pain, itching, loss of appetite
- ✓ Yellow skin or eyes, dark urine, pale stool
- ✓ Kids: Severe stomach pains and diarrhea, or no symptoms



Complications can send people to the hospital. Some may die.



Be Wise — ImmunizeSM

Physicians Caring for Texans

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mayo Clinic

Be Wise — ImmunizeSM is a joint initiative led by TMA physicians and medical students, and the TMA Alliance. It is funded by the TMA Foundation thanks to major gifts from H-E-B, TMA Health Quality Institute, Pfizer Inc., and contributions from physicians and their families.

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