



News From Cabell-Huntington Health Department (06-15-2018)

Contact:

Elizabeth A. Adkins, MS
Director of Health & Wellness/PIO
Cabell-Huntington Health Department
Office (304) 523-6483 ext. 258
Fax (304) 523-6482
elizabeth.a.adkins@wv.gov
cabellhealth.org

CABELL COUNTY HEPATITIS A OUTBREAK UPDATE

HUNTINGTON, WV - The Cabell-Huntington Health Department is updating advice and recommendations regarding the ongoing multistate hepatitis A outbreak affecting the county. The outbreak began in early 2017 and has spread more recently to this area. The first Cabell County confirmed case in this outbreak was reported April 9, 2018.

Hepatitis A is a viral infection of the liver spread by unsanitary practices. It is important to wash hands thoroughly after using the bathroom or changing diapers and wash hands before handling food and eating.

Persons at highest risk to get and spread the disease are persons living in conditions without sanitary facilities, persons who use drugs, travelers to areas of the world where the disease is common, and some others.

“We are working vigorously to immunize and prevent disease among the persons at highest risk for its spread, and to prevent disease in others, especially those who might become severely ill or die from it,” says Dr. Michael Kilkenny, Physician Director of the Cabell-Huntington Health Department. Persons with hepatitis C, hepatitis B, cirrhosis, or other liver disease tend to get sicker and should consider immunization against hepatitis A. Your health care provider or pharmacy is the first line of access for immunizations.

Local restaurants are taking special precautions to protect patrons from this disease. Besides usual food safety activities many restaurants are arranging voluntarily immunizations for their employees. Guidance regarding this recommendation is county-based and collaborative with the WV Bureau for Public Health. There were no cases of hepatitis A among Cabell County food workers this week.

The WV Bureau for Public Health’s hepatitis A outbreak report, found at <https://dhhr.wv.gov/oeps/disease/Pages/default.aspx>, is updated weekly on Fridays, using information provided by the Cabell-Huntington Health Department as well as other local health departments, and can be used to follow the Cabell County situation in comparison with other counties.

The Cabell-Huntington Health Department will notify the public immediately if risks or prevention recommendations change.

For more information and a list of hepatitis A vaccine providers cooperating with the health department to assure adequate vaccination availability, visit cabellhealth.org.

###