



Statement From Cabell-Huntington Health Department
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CABELL-HUNTINGTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONFIRMS HEPATITIS A IN FOOD SERVICE WORKER

HUNTINGTON, WV - The Cabell-Huntington Health Department (CHHD) has confirmed a case of hepatitis A in a food service worker at Starbucks, 285 9th Street, Huntington, WV.

This investigation is part of a multistate outbreak of hepatitis A. CHHD is working closely with the WV Bureau of Public Health to address cases, contacts and immunization in high risk populations.

Restaurant patrons have a very low risk of contracting hepatitis A from restaurant prepared food, and there has been no restaurant related transmission during this regional outbreak. However, patrons wishing to further reduce risk may consider immunization from their medical provider or pharmacy if they consumed food at the restaurant between July 2nd – 3rd 2018.

A CHHD investigation of the restaurant has revealed no breach of safe food handling protocol. The restaurant voluntarily closed for disinfectant cleaning.

“As soon as we were notified of this single partner diagnosis, we acted quickly to minimize risks to customers and partners (employees),” said a Starbucks spokesperson. “Out of an abundance of caution we thoroughly sanitized our store, and are working closely with the health department to ensure the store remains safe for customers and partners.”

Hepatitis A is a viral disease of the liver. It is spread from person to person by the “fecal-oral” route, often by inadequate handwashing after using the toilet or changing diapers.

Persons suspecting that they have symptoms of hepatitis should contact their health care provider. Persons working as food handlers who experience symptoms of hepatitis should not work and should be seen by a health care provider. The symptoms include nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting, fatigue, fever, abdominal cramps, dark colored urine, light or whitish-colored stools, and jaundice (a yellow color to the eyes or skin). Incubation period is two to six weeks from exposure to symptoms. Persons with questions should contact their personal health care provider or the Cabell-Huntington Health Department at (304) 523-6483.

Prevention: Thorough handwashing with soap and hot water after using the toilet and before handling food is the most important factor in preventing spread. Vaccinations are highly effective if received within 14 days of exposure.

Further information on hepatitis A can be obtained at www.cabellhealth.org or <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/>.

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