



News From Cabell-Huntington Health Department (08-03-2018)

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CABELL COUNTY HEPATITIS A OUTBREAK UPDATE

HUNTINGTON, WV - The Cabell-Huntington Health Department is continuing to monitor the multistate outbreak of hepatitis A in Cabell County. Health officials are still working diligently to investigate the high case load.

The Cabell-Huntington Health Department is expanding vaccination efforts to reach more at-risk contacts of high risk individuals, including household-sharing family and friends. High risk groups include persons who use injection and non-injection drugs and persons with unstable housing. Persons who had contact with someone who became ill with hepatitis A should seek vaccination after contact as soon as possible, but within two weeks of exposure. Cabell-Huntington Health Department has also obtained more vaccine to offer those who need it but are uninsured or can't afford it. The health department staff can help determine if you qualify for vaccine at reduced or no cost. Those with adequate insurance are still recommended to get vaccine at their health care provider or local pharmacy.

"With school resuming, parents should take advantage of the opportunity to be sure their children are protected against hepatitis A along with the vaccines required for school attendance. Hepatitis A vaccine is currently required in WV for children entering daycare and Pre-K, but not for public school entry. Therefore, many children have been immunized but some have not. The prevention of childhood and adolescent cases in this outbreak, and our best defense against future outbreaks, is to give children lifelong immunity, now" states Michael Kilkenny, Physician Director for Cabell-Huntington Health Department.

The health department would like to remind the community on the critical steps of prevention for hepatitis A.

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. Two doses of hepatitis A vaccination is recommended, second dose is received six months after first dose. After receiving the first dose, the vaccine is 95% effective. Vaccine is available

Hepatitis A Vaccine

The hepatitis A vaccine is a 2 shot series and is available at Cabell-Huntington Health Department. The cost of the vaccine is \$75.00 per shot. The second dose in the series is given 6 months after the first dose. Hepatitis A immunization is well tolerated and widely available, after the first dose the vaccine is 95% effective.

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

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