



## Barry-Eaton District Health Department

Be Active • Be Safe • Be Healthy

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### **Hepatitis A Outbreaks across the State**

As a result of Hepatitis A outbreaks around the state, the Barry-Eaton District Health Department (BEDHD) would like to take this time to remind residents that vaccination is your best defense against Hepatitis A.

Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable, contagious liver disease. It is often spread through the ingestion of food or water contaminated with infected feces or by oral contact with contaminated objects. Transmission can occur easily among household contacts and sexual partners. High risk factors include homelessness or use of transient housing, illicit drug use, and incarceration. Men who have sex with men and sex workers and their clients are also at high risk. While the risk of getting hepatitis A is higher among these specific populations, BEDHD recommends that all individuals be vaccinated against the disease.

Hepatitis A can range from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious illness lasting several months. Illness generally occurs two to six weeks after exposure to the hepatitis A virus. Symptoms includes fatigue, abdominal pain, yellow skin (jaundice), dark urine, and pale stool. Some people have no symptoms. Vaccination and thorough hand washing can prevent infection.

People who believe they have been exposed to hepatitis A or who have symptoms should contact their healthcare provider immediately. Anyone who wants to be vaccinated should contact their healthcare provider or BEDHD at (517) 541-2630 for Eaton County or (269) 798-4133 for Barry County.