

# NMDOH Hepatitis A Guidance: Hospital Emergency Departments



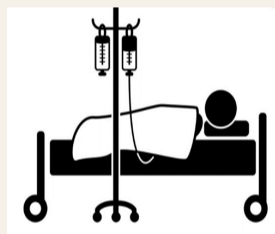
## What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious, vaccine-preventable liver infection. The infection spreads from person-to-person through ingestion of food, water, or oral contact with objects (including hands) contaminated by feces of an HAV-infected individual. Transmission occurs easily among sexual contacts and close household contacts, as well as among persons sharing needles and non-injection drugs. The incubation period can be 15 - 50 days.

## Vaccinate patients at risk:

- Men who have sex with men
- Persons with a history of substance use
- Persons currently experiencing homeless or in unstable housing
- Correctional facility inmates
- Persons with underlying liver disease\*

## Hepatitis A New Mexico Outbreak



Most cases have required hospitalization and/or are associated with people who use syringes or substances

\*Note: persons with underlying liver disease (e.g., cirrhosis, hepatitis B, or hepatitis C) are at increased risk of having poor outcomes if they are infected with hepatitis A.

## What are the symptoms of hepatitis A?



Jaundice and/or elevated serum aminotransferase (ALT) levels and any of the following symptoms:

- Nausea or vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Fatigue / tired
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes)
- Dark urine, pale stools, or diarrhea



**Report** all confirmed or suspected cases to the New Mexico Department of Health, Epidemiology and Response Division within 24 hours by calling 505-827-0006 and or faxing patient demographics and laboratory report to 505-827-0013



**Prevent** hepatitis A through vaccination, standard precautions and proper handwashing.

**Promote** vaccination for those exposed and anyone in a risk group.