

Health Advisory: Hepatitis A Linked to Frozen Strawberries (Corrected)

Minnesota Department of Health Nov 9, 2016 14:00 CST

Action Steps:

Local and tribal health departments: Please forward to hospitals, clinics, urgent care and convenience clinics in your jurisdiction.

Hospital and clinics: Please distribute to health care professionals

Healthcare providers:

- Provide post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) to persons who have been notified of an exposure to recalled strawberries in the last 14 days and who have not previously received hepatitis A vaccine.
- Consider hepatitis A in patients presenting with symptoms including fever, headache, abdominal pain, and diarrhea.
- Report cases to MDH at 1-877-676-5414 (toll-free) or 651-201-5414.
- Promote the two-dose series of hepatitis A vaccine.

Background

A multistate outbreak of foodborne hepatitis A is being investigated by the CDC, FDA and several states. Frozen strawberries from Egypt were the likely source of the outbreak. No cases associated with this outbreak have been reported in Minnesota; however, the implicated strawberries were distributed to more than 500 institutions, food service operations, and independent restaurants statewide prior to the recall.

Frozen strawberries associated with this outbreak and produced between January and October 2016 were recalled on October 25, 2016, but may have been served more recently. Symptoms of hepatitis A appear between 15 and 50 days (generally about 28 days) after exposure.

Facilities that received these strawberries have been notified by the FDA and the distributor. Facilities that served the product in the last two weeks were told to contact the health department and communicate to customers about the need for post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). Those seeking PEP may present to clinics or hospitals.

Hepatitis A Transmission and Symptoms:

Hepatitis A is a contagious liver disease that results from infection with the hepatitis A virus. It can range in severity from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a severe illness lasting several months. Although rare, people have died from infection with hepatitis A. Symptoms appear between 15 and 50 days (generally about 28 days) after infection.

Hepatitis A symptoms include fever, headache, malaise, nausea, anorexia, abdominal pain, vomiting, and diarrhea. The following symptoms may follow: dark urine, light colored stool, and jaundice. Young children (under age 6) are often asymptomatic or have mild symptoms.

Hepatitis A Post-exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)

Patients who have consumed recalled strawberries in the last 14 days and who have not previously received hepatitis A vaccine should receive:

- One dose of vaccine to persons 1 to 40 years of age
- One dose of immune globulin (IG) for children under 1 year of age
- One dose of IG for adults age 40 or older (vaccine can be given at the same time as IG or instead of IG if it is not available)

Hepatitis A Vaccine

Hepatitis A vaccine is given as a two-dose series and recommended for:

- all persons who wish to be protected
- all children beginning at **12** months of age
- persons traveling to endemic areas
- persons who will be living with or providing care for internationally adopted children

More information

Additional information on hepatitis A for clinicians and the general public are available on the MDH website at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/hepa/index.html> or call 1-877-676-5414 (toll-free) or 651-201-5414. Additional Information about the national recall is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/outbreaks/2016/hav-strawberries.htm> .

A copy of this HAN is available in PDF and Word format at www.health.state.mn.us/han/.

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