

Hepatitis A cluster in Minnesota

There are multiple hepatitis A outbreaks occurring across the U.S. Minnesota is not currently experiencing an outbreak; however, we have identified a cluster of cases in Minnesota. These cases were infected in Minnesota and had reported risk factors seen in the national outbreaks. Since the U.S. outbreaks were first identified in 2016, there have been over 18,000 cases, 10,000 hospitalizations, and 181 deaths in 23 states. The highest risk groups for acquiring hepatitis A in these outbreaks include:

- People who use injection and non-injection drugs.
- People experiencing homelessness or unstable housing.
- People who are currently or were recently incarcerated.
- Men who have sex with men (MSM).

Given the nationwide outbreaks and the severity of hepatitis A infection, we are urging providers to take these steps:

- Promote and vaccinate with hepatitis A vaccine, prioritizing high-risk groups.
- Test patients with hepatitis A symptoms, testing should include hepatitis A IgM antibody testing and liver function tests.
- Report suspected cases to MDH and contact us with questions at 1-877-676-5414 (toll-free) or 651-201-5414.

For more information, read the Health Advisory: National Hepatitis A Outbreaks (www.health.state.mn.us/communities/ep/han/2019/may20hepa.pdf) sent on May 20, 2019. For resources to give to patients about hepatitis A, including a new visual fact sheet titled "What to know about hepatitis A," go to our About Hepatitis A (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/hepatitis/a/basics.html) website.

Adult measles vaccination recommendations

There have been a lot of questions about MMR vaccination recommendations for adults. Here's what you need to know:

- Providers do not need to actively screen and recall all adult patients for measles immunity. This is because of high population immunity and low risk of disease among adults in non-outbreak areas in the U.S.
- Providers should make sure patients have measles protection before international travel. U.S. residents traveling internationally are at high risk for acquiring measles abroad. They can also transmit measles to susceptible persons, such as infants, when they return home.
- Serologic testing for measles immunity is not recommended. However, if measles immunity is unknown (i.e., born after 1957 and no documented vaccination or history of disease) give a dose of MMR, unless there are contraindications. Additionally, there are no concerns about MMR vaccine supply despite increased demand.
- There are currently no changes to the MMR schedule in Minnesota.

For more details, see our new "Adult Measles Vaccination" document on the Measles Information for Health Professionals (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/hcp/index.html) website.

Identify patients who need a vaccine

The Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (MIIC) can help identify patients who need an MMR or a hepatitis A vaccine. Go to MIIC Client Follow-Up (www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/train/followup.html) for guidance on how to get a list of

patients due or overdue for MMR or hepatitis A vaccine based on Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations. Health care providers can use this MIIC function to improve immunization coverage rates for their client populations, which can help prevent future outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases. Contact the MIIC Help Desk at health.miichelp@state.mn.us if you need assistance.

Immunization reminder campaigns

We are sending two immunization reminder postcards in June 2019 as part of a campaign to help raise immunization rates across the state:

- A meningococcal booster-focused postcard will reach parents of 16-year-olds who have received an initial dose of MenACWY but no booster, according to the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (MIIC). The messaging focuses on the booster but also includes information about adolescent catch-up vaccines and MenB.
- A pneumococcal-focused postcard will reach 65-year-olds who have not received a pneumococcal vaccine since turning 65, according to MIIC. The messaging focuses on pneumococcal but also includes information about other adult vaccines.

These are our first statewide immunization reminder campaigns targeting older adolescents and adults. We are excited to use this evidence-based approach to help more Minnesotans get the vaccines they need! Please contact the MIIC Help Desk at health.miichelp@state.mn.us with any questions.

New immunization form

Our new immunization form to help parents document their child's immunization history or a medical/non-medical exemption is now available! The new form can be found on Vaccines for Infants, Children, and Adolescents (www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/kids.html). There have been no changes to the law or requirements, only improvements to the form. Improvements to the immunization form include:

- Consolidation to a single form for school, child care, and early childhood education.
- Clearer instructions for parents.
- Formatting changes to make the form more readable.
- Creation of a table for exemptions so parents can select the specific vaccine for which they are requesting an exemption.
- Removed certain signature requirements. Signatures and notarization are still required for non-medical exemptions, and a health care practitioner signature is still required for disease history and medical exemptions.
- Translations in other languages: Amharic, Hmong, Karen, Russian, Spanish, Somali, and Vietnamese.

The new immunization form can be used for the 2019-2020 school year, but it is not required. It will be required to be used in the 2020-2021 school year. Please contact us if you have any questions at 651-201-5503 or 800-657-3970.