



# ALLEGHENY COUNTY

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## Health Department Recommends At-Risk Residents Get Vaccinated Against Hepatitis A

**PITTSBURGH** – The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) is recommending that at-risk residents get vaccinated against Hepatitis A (HAV). While there have been no outbreaks of Hepatitis A in Allegheny County, since March of 2017, multiple states have reported HAV outbreaks: California, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, New York, Utah and nearby Ohio and West Virginia.

The Health Department has, and will continue to, monitor this reportable disease in the county. In the states where outbreaks have been reported, the majority of cases have occurred in persons at higher risk: the homeless, people who use illicit drugs (injection and non-injection) and men that have sex with men. Cases have also been reported among people who provide services to the homeless and have also included infected food handlers.

“As outbreaks of Hepatitis A come closer to western Pennsylvania, it is important that our county is prepared. Primarily this means that residents in our area that are high-risk need to be vaccinated as soon as possible,” said Dr. Karen Hacker, Health Department Director. “If you are at risk, talk with your healthcare provider about receiving the vaccination. For those in our community who are under or uninsured residents, the [Health Department's Immunization Clinic](#) offers free Hepatitis A vaccinations.”

Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable, communicable disease of the liver, and is usually transmitted from person-to-person through the fecal-oral route or from consuming contaminated food or water. While childhood vaccination against Hepatitis A has been routine since 2006, many adults over the age of 20 may not have received the vaccine.

Although Hepatitis A is very contagious, you can take the following steps to prevent Hepatitis A:

- Get vaccinated for Hepatitis A
- Don't have sexual intercourse with someone who has the Hepatitis A infection
- Use your own towels, toothbrushes and eating utensils
- Don't share food, drinks, or smoking products with other people
- Wash your hands with soap and water after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and before preparing, serving or eating food

For more information on Hepatitis A, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/afaq.htm> to view this Q&A from the Centers for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/afaq.htm>. You can also contact the Health Department's clinic directly at 412-578-8060 with questions.

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