



# HEPATITIS A

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## What is it?

- Hepatitis A is a highly contagious virus that causes a liver infection.

## Signs and Symptoms

- Many people, especially children, show no symptoms or very mild symptoms.
- For people who do get sick, the symptoms include fever, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, diarrhea, and yellowing of the skin and the whites of the eyes (jaundice).
- It takes on average 28 days to become sick after coming in contact with the hepatitis A virus, ranging from 15-50 days.
- In mild cases symptoms may only last 1-2 weeks and in more severe cases symptoms can last several months.

## How do you get it?

- The hepatitis A virus is present in the feces (stools) of infected people.
- Hepatitis A can be spread by:
  - A person who has hepatitis A and has not washed their hands well after using the toilet
  - Eating food contaminated by someone who has the virus
  - Eating raw or uncooked shellfish that came from contaminated waters

## Treatment

- No specific treatment exists, your body will clear the virus over time.

## Prevention

- Hepatitis A vaccine (especially if going on vacation)
- See the fact sheet Hepatitis A Vaccine
- When on vacation, avoid raw or undercooked meat and fish, drink only bottled water and be cautious of fruits and vegetables washed in water that could potentially be contaminated.
- Practice good hand hygiene after using the toilet and before preparing food.

**Hepatitis A is a reportable disease and must be reported to the Local Medical Officer of Health under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.**