



KAREN L. SMITH, MD, MPH
Director and State Public Health Officer

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
Governor

PROVIDER ALERT – IMMUNIZE MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN AGAINST HEPATITIS A

December 1, 2017

This message is intended for adult primary care, HIV, infectious disease, emergency medicine, hospitalists, and urgent care providers and may be shared freely.

BACKGROUND: Since 1996, the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has recommended immunization against hepatitis A infection for men who have sex with men (MSM) because of their higher risk of infection. CDPH reminds providers to immunize HIV negative and HIV positive MSM in light of recent disease activity, and offer HIV testing to MSM not known to be positive. As of November 10, 2017, case counts of MSM with hepatitis A infection in 2017 include at least:

- 5,000 cases reported in 14 European countries
- 700 cases reported in Chile
- Dozens of cases reported in Colorado and New York City
- 51 cases reported in California, which is a four-fold increase from the 12 cases reported as of the same date (November 10th) in 2016. The cases this year include at least 19 reported in Los Angeles County and 10 reported in San Francisco.
 - Cases were exposed to hepatitis A virus inside and outside of California.
 - Most of these cases are unrelated to the larger outbreak of hepatitis A that is occurring in people experiencing homelessness or using illicit drugs in San Diego, Santa Cruz, Los Angeles and other counties in California.

ACTIONS REQUESTED OF CLINICIANS

1. Please routinely identify and vaccinate the following people with single-antigen hepatitis A or combined hepatitis A and B vaccine:
 - MSM not yet known to be immune against hepatitis A
 - Please also provide other recommended vaccinations if not yet received, including but not limited to, hepatitis B vaccine and annual seasonal influenza vaccine.
 - Other people at increased risk of hepatitis A, including people with:
 - Chronic liver disease (alcoholic cirrhosis, chronic hepatitis B or C infection)
 - International travelers to HAV-endemic areas
 - People using injection or non-injection drugs

Immunization Branch / Division of Communicable Disease Control
850 Marina Bay Parkway, Bldg. P, 2nd Floor, Richmond, CA 94804
(510) 620-3737 ♦ FAX (510) 620-3774 ♦ Internet Address: www.getimmunizedca.org



- People experiencing homelessness
- 2. Suspect the diagnosis of acute hepatitis A in individuals from risk groups mentioned above who have abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, fever, jaundice, or significant elevation in liver function tests. Confirm the diagnosis with serum hepatitis A IgM testing.
- 3. Immediately report all suspect and confirmed hepatitis A cases to your local health department.

Additional Information for clinicians in Los Angeles County and San Francisco is available at

- Los Angeles: 11-2-2017 alert is posted at publichealth.lacounty.gov/eprp/Health%20Alerts/DPH%20alert%20HAV%20MSM%20FINAL%20110217.pdf
- San Francisco: 9-28-2017 advisory is posted at <http://www.sfcddcp.org/healthalerts.html>

Patient Resources:

[Viral Hepatitis Fact Sheet: Information for Gay and Bisexual Men \(CDC\)](#)
[Vaccinations for Men Who Have Sex with Men \(IAC\)](#)

Thank you for efforts to protect public health in California.