

# Protecting our Homeless Residents at Risk of Hepatitis A Infection

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# Agenda

- Hepatitis & hepatitis A
- Current outbreak
- How is hepatitis A spread and what can we do to prevent an outbreak
  - Identifying those at risk
  - Educate yourself, your co-workers, and your clients
  - Refer to medical care for evaluation and/or vaccination
  - Best strategies for preventing spread
- Special considerations for homeless clients
- Review

# What is Hepatitis?

“Hepatitis” means inflammation of the liver



Caused by alcohol, infection, toxins, medications and medical conditions

Can be temporary (acute) or long term (chronic) if it lasts >6 months

# Current **Hepatitis A** Outbreak in California



565 cases in 5 CA counties and 2 other western states (current as of 9/19/17)

Largest U.S. person-to-person outbreak of hepatitis A in the vaccine era (>1996)

Past outbreaks in similar populations have been very difficult to stop. **Your work is key to preventing an outbreak.**

# Who is at Higher Risk?

Travelers to certain countries

Men who have sex with men

Illicit drug users

Homeless persons

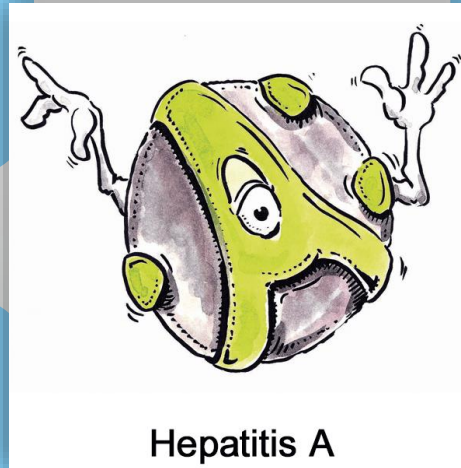
People who work with high risk populations: You!



# How does **Hepatitis A** Spread?

Ingestion of fecal matter,  
even in microscopic amounts from:

Touching objects or  
eating food handled  
by an infected  
person



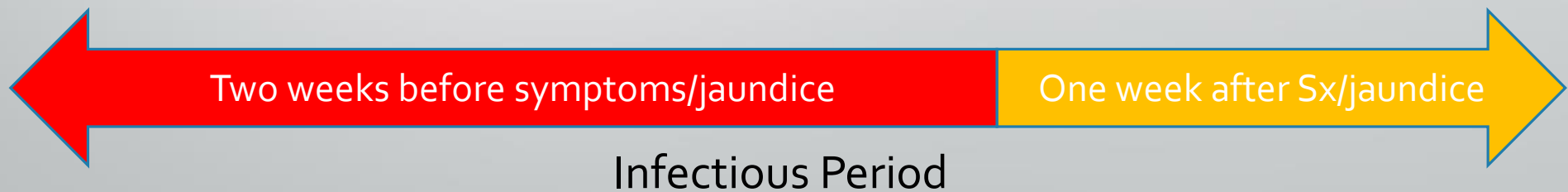
Close person-to-  
person contact with  
an infected person

Sharing/use of  
recreational drugs  
(not just IVDU) with  
an infected person

Sexual contact with  
an infected person



People who are contagious usually do not know that they have an infection





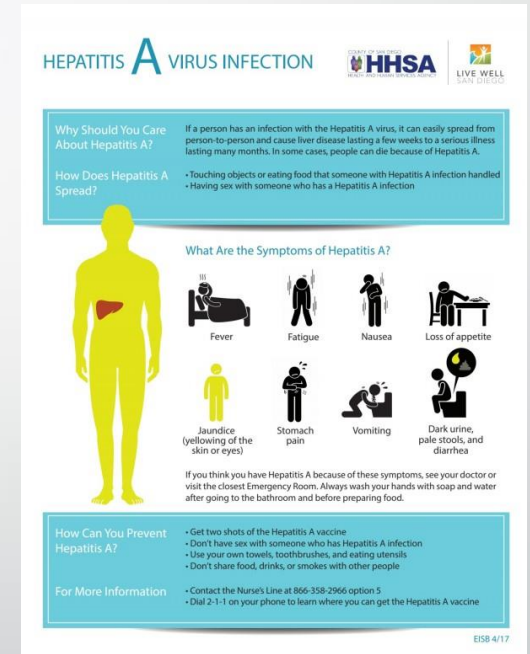
# What do we tell our clients?

Get vaccinated!!!

Wash hands!!!

If they think they have been exposed to a case or have symptoms...

- See your doctor or visit closest ER
- Wash your hands with soap and water after using the bathroom and before eating
- Do not prepare or handle food for others
- Do not share food, drinks, or drugs with anyone





# What are the Symptoms?



Fever



Fatigue



Nausea



Loss of appetite



Jaundice  
(yellowing of the  
skin or eyes)



Stomach  
pain

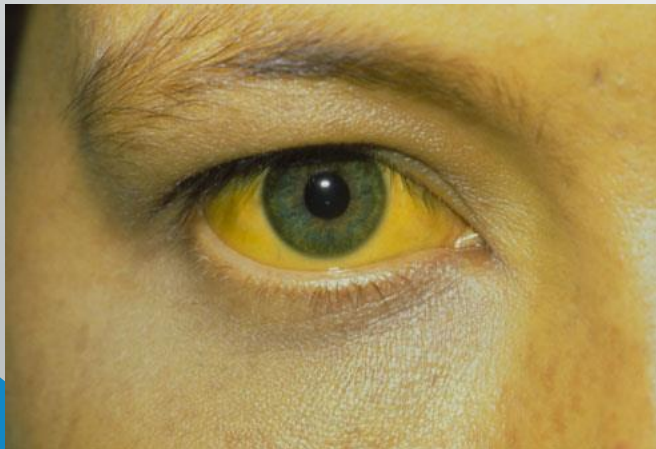
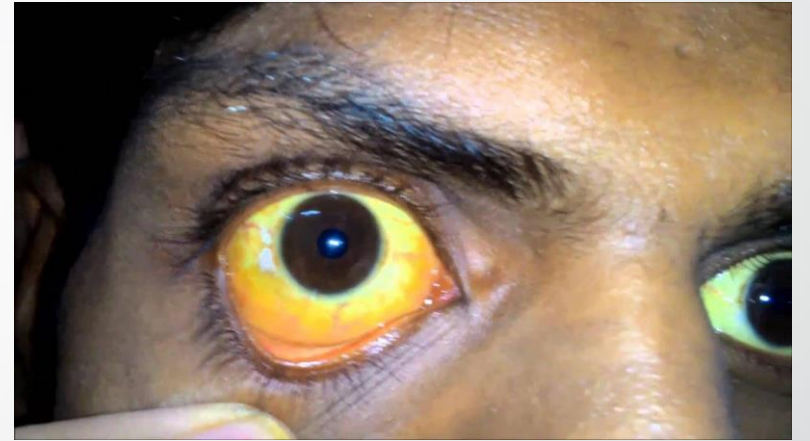


Vomiting



Dark urine,  
pale stools, and  
diarrhea

# Jaundice

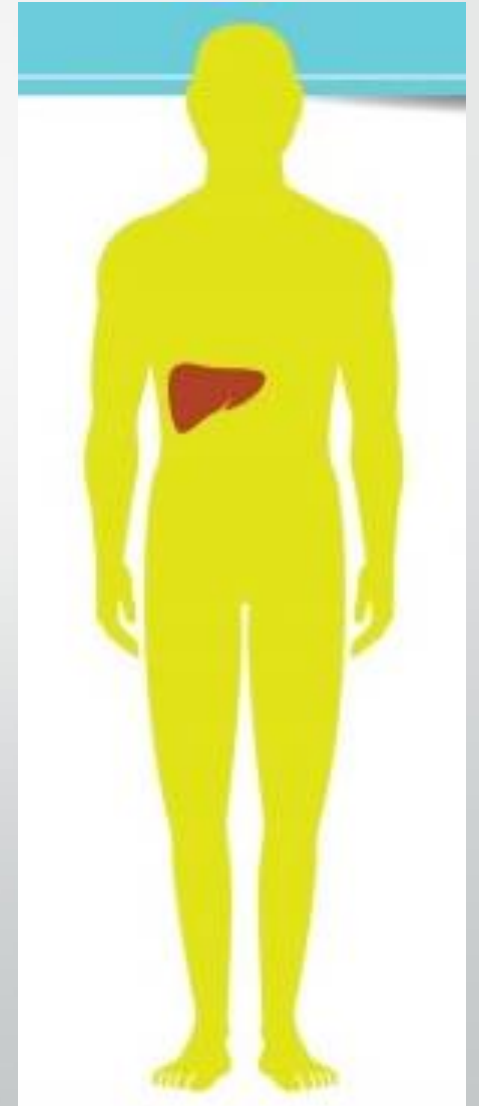


# What are the Symptoms?

Not everyone develops symptoms

Symptoms start 2-6 weeks after being exposed/infected, most commonly at about 4 weeks

Symptoms usually last less than 2 months but can last up to 6 months



# Don't Spread Hepatitis A

Don't prepare food for other people

Don't handle food for other people

Don't serve food to other people

Don't share food with others

Don't share drinks with others

Don't share smokes/drugs with others



# Don't Spread Hepatitis A

## Best Practices for Handwashing:

- Use running water
- Use soap
- Scrub for at least 20 seconds

## When to wash your hands:

- After using the bathroom
- After helping someone use the bathroom
- After changing a diaper
- Before touching or preparing food





# Other steps to prevent the spread of Hepatitis A

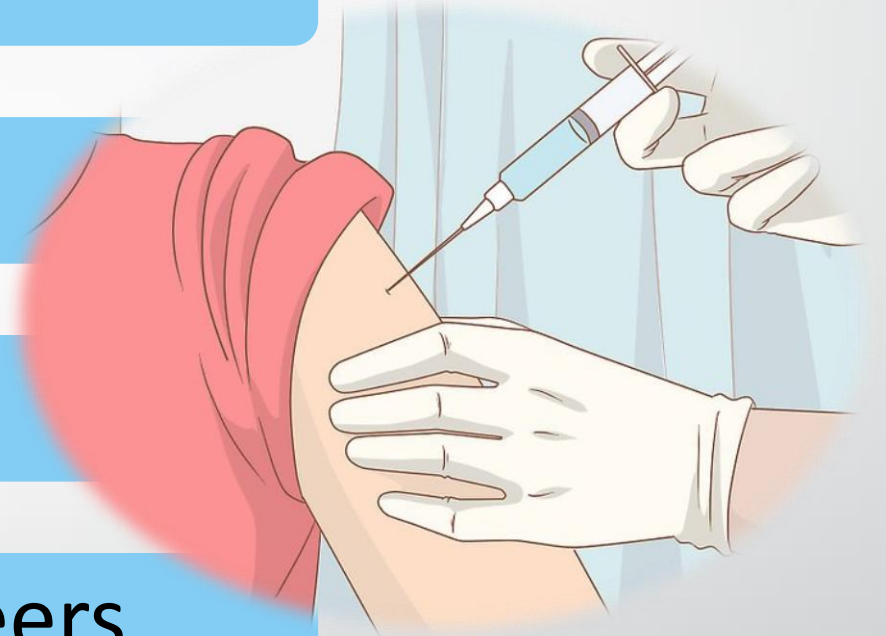
Use your own toothbrush and razor

Use your own eating utensils

Use your own towel

Promote vaccination of your peers

Cleaning/disinfection of group facilities\*



\*[http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/deh/fhd/food/pdf/publications\\_hepatitisA.pdf](http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/deh/fhd/food/pdf/publications_hepatitisA.pdf)

# Special Concerns for the Homeless

Lack of adequate facilities

Barriers to accessing services

Comorbidities

Transportation

Children

Sharing

Communication

Challenges to assessment





# Review

- Hepatitis A is a potentially severe and easily transmitted illness
- There is currently a Hep A outbreak in California primarily effecting homeless and drug using populations
- Homeless and IV drug users are at increased risk of the most severe illness and death from Hep A
- Hepatitis may be asymptomatic but more commonly presents as:
  - Jaundice
  - Fatigue
  - Stomach pain
  - Fever
  - Nausea
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Dark urine / pale stools
  - Loss of appetite
- What can be done to prevent the spread in Alameda County:
  - Get vaccinated against Hepatitis A
  - Wash hands with soap and water
  - Know the symptoms and seek medical care and diagnosis if exposed or showing symptoms

# Review

- If someone is diagnosed with Hepatitis A:
  - Don't prepare, handle, or serve food, drinks, or drugs for others
  - Don't share food, drinks, or drugs with others
  - They are contagious from about two weeks before symptoms started to about one week after jaundice/symptoms start and may have exposed others who should be vaccinated ASAP
  - Answer phone calls from providers and Public Health if they call
- Your work is crucial to preventing an outbreak of Hepatitis A in Alameda County
- You need to be vaccinated to do your work safely and effectively
- Get vaccinated and promote vaccination of those that you meet

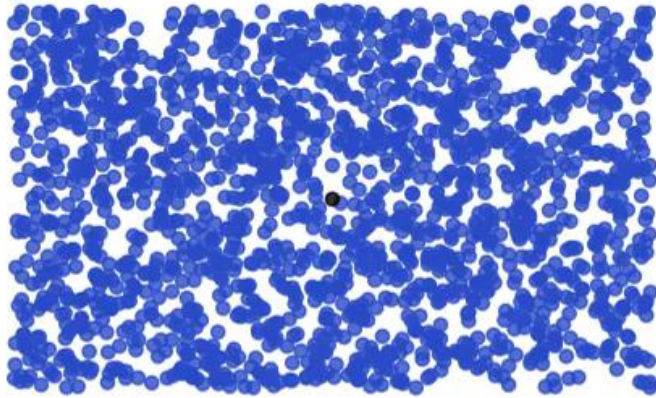


**QUESTIONS**

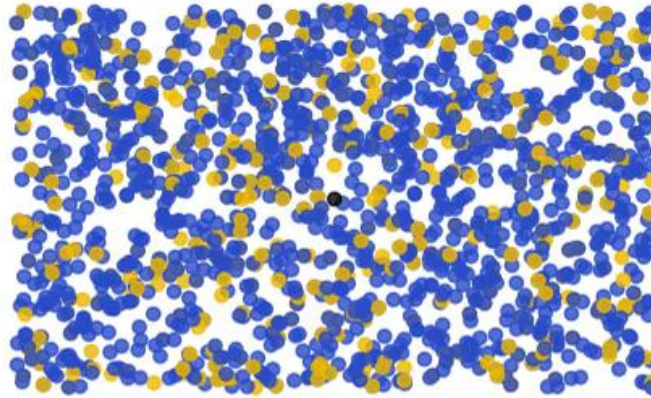


# Herd Immunity: How It Works

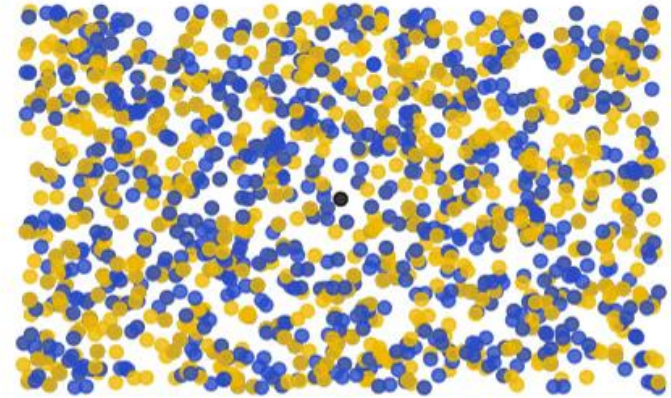
Percent Vaccinated: 0%



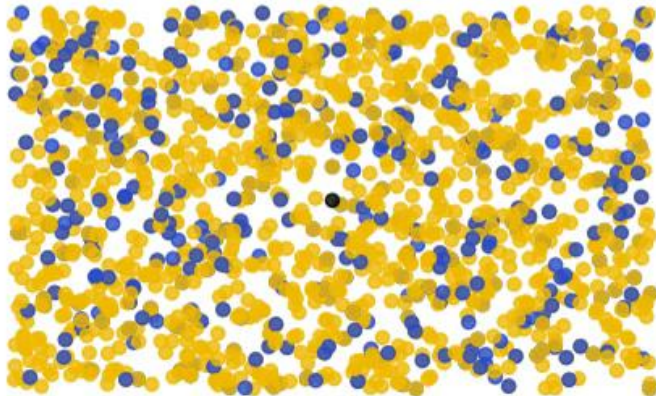
Percent Vaccinated: 25%



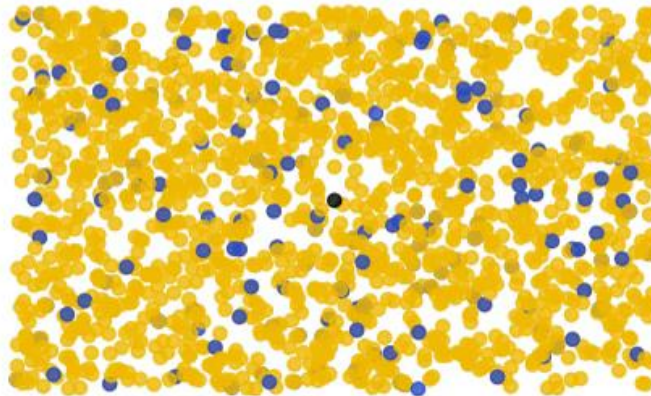
Percent Vaccinated: 50%



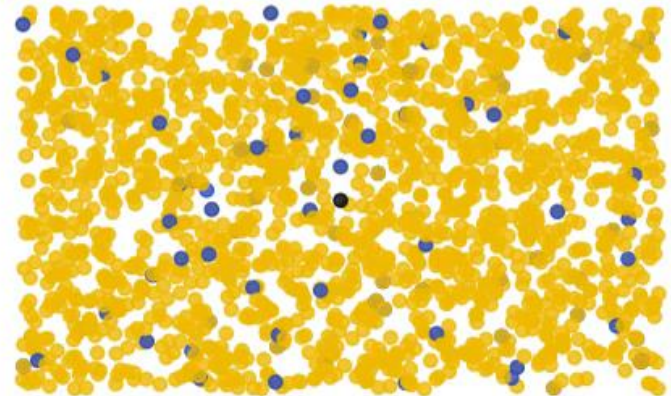
Percent Vaccinated: 75%



Percent Vaccinated: 90%



Percent Vaccinated: 95%



• Infected • Unvaccinated • Vaccinated