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PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

To: Medical Providers, Clinicians, Hospitalists, Healthcare Facilities, Physician Practices, Corrections and Veteran agencies, school healthcare, Emergency Services,
From: Dr. Siiri Bennett, State Epidemiologist
Subject: Acute Hepatitis A Case in a Food Service Worker in Caribou, Maine
Date / Time: Friday, May 17, 2019 at 5:00pm
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Priority: **High**
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Abstract:

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) identified a case of acute hepatitis A virus infection in a Caribou, Maine food service worker. The case prepped food while infectious from April 24, 2019 thru May 13, 2019. A public health assessment of the employee's illness determined that restaurant patrons may be at risk for hepatitis A infection.

Maine CDC recommends the hepatitis A vaccine as post-exposure prophylaxis to anyone who ate or worked at Burger Boy Restaurant in Caribou, Maine from May 3, 2019 thru May 13, 2019. Exposed persons can receive post-exposure prophylaxis up to 14 days from exposure, after which the treatment is no longer effective. Anyone who visited the restaurant from April 24, 2019 thru May 2, 2019, is outside the window for which prophylaxis is recommended, but they should watch for symptoms and seek medical attention should they develop symptoms.

Health care providers are encouraged to remain vigilant for hepatitis A infection in persons with consistent symptoms. All cases of hepatitis are reportable in Maine. Providers with suspected cases should report them to Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.



Acute Hepatitis A Case in a Food Service Worker in Caribou, Maine

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) identified a case of acute hepatitis A virus infection in a Caribou, Maine food service worker. The case prepped food while infectious from April 24, 2019 thru May 13, 2019. A public health assessment of the employee's illness determined that restaurant patrons may be at risk for hepatitis A infection. Maine CDC recommends the hepatitis A vaccine as post-exposure prophylaxis to anyone who ate or worked at Burger Boy Restaurant in Caribou, Maine from May 3, 2019 thru May 13, 2019. Anyone who visited the restaurant from April 24, 2019 thru May 3, 2019, is outside the window for which prophylaxis is recommended, but they should watch for symptoms and seek medical attention should they develop symptoms. Health care providers are encouraged to remain vigilant for hepatitis A infection in persons with consistent symptoms.

Background:

Hepatitis A virus is transmitted by the fecal-oral route, commonly through consumption of contaminated food or water. Persons will begin to exhibit symptoms 15-50 days after exposure to the virus. A person is considered infectious approximately two weeks prior to symptom onset until one week after onset of symptoms.

Exposed persons can receive post-exposure prophylaxis up to 14 days from exposure, after which, the treatment is no longer effective. Prophylaxis includes hepatitis A vaccine. Immunocompromised individuals or children under 12 months old should consult their healthcare providers about receiving hepatitis A immune globulin (IG).

Recommendations:

Healthcare providers should consider testing for hepatitis A if patients present with any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Jaundice
- Nausea
- Clay colored stool
- Dark urine
- Malaise
- Abdominal discomfort
- Anorexia
- Vomiting

Testing includes an acute hepatitis panel (should include hepatitis A IgM) and liver enzymes.

Reporting:

All cases of suspected and confirmed hepatitis A infection should be reported by phone to the 24/7 disease reporting and consultation line at 1-800-821-5821.

For More Information:

- Maine CDC website <http://www.maine.gov/idepi/>
- Federal CDC's Hepatitis A website <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HAV/index.htm>.
- ACIP Hepatitis A vaccine recommendations: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/vacc-specific/hepa.html>.