

# MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT NETWORK SYSTEM

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*Maine Department of Health and Human Services  
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC)  
(Formerly Bureau of Health)  
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**\*\*ADVISORY – Important Information\*\***

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**2014PHADV026**

**TO:** City and County Health Organizations, County Emergency Management, Department of Education, Maine Emergency medical Services, Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Healthcare, Hospitals, laboratory Facilities, Division of Infectious Disease, Maine Health Care Association, Maine Hospital Association, Maine Medical Association, Maine Primary Care Association, New England State Contacts, Northern New England Poison Center, Physician Practices, Regional Resource Centers, Tribal Health Organizations

**FROM:** Dr. Sheila Pinette, Maine CDC Director

**SUBJECT:** Hepatitis A in a Food Service Worker

**DATE:** Thursday, October 30, 2014

**TIME:** 9:30am

**PAGES:** 2

**PRIORITY:** Normal

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## Acute Hepatitis A Infection in a Food Service Worker – Maine, 2014

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) identified a case of acute hepatitis A virus infection in a Cumberland County food service worker. The case served food while infectious from September 29, 2014 thru October 11, 2014. A public health assessment of the employee's illness, and food and beverage preparation practices, determined that restaurant patrons may be at risk for hepatitis A infection. Maine CDC was notified of the illness beyond the 14-day window of opportunity for post-exposure prophylaxis to be effective. 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 after exposure. Prophylaxis includes hepatitis A vaccine for individuals 12 months – 40 years or immune globulin (IG) for individuals less than 12 months or 41 years of age and older (vaccine can be given to individuals 41 and over if IG is unavailable).

### 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

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/HA V/index.htm>.
- ACIP Hepatitis A vaccine recommendations: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/vacc-specific/hepa.html>.