

November 5, 2018

MORE THAN 600 RECEIVE HEP A VACCINE FOLLOWING HAMBURGER MARY'S INCIDENT



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Tampa, Fla. – The Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County (DOH-Hillsborough) administered 620 hepatitis A vaccines following the Hamburger Mary's Ybor City incident. The vaccine was free for those who ate or drank between October 4 – 20, at the Hamburger Mary's Ybor City. Additionally, the 24-hour hotline received more than 400 calls.

So far, there have been no Hepatitis A cases linked to the Hamburger Mary's incident.

The vaccine was offered by DOH-Hillsborough to prevent those who may have been exposed to hepatitis A from getting sick. However, to prevent illness, the vaccine must be administered within two weeks of exposure. That time has now expired for those impacted by the Hamburger Mary's Ybor City incident. Anyone who develops hepatitis A symptoms should visit a healthcare provider immediately.

DOH-Hillsborough continues to encourage all healthcare providers, including hospital emergency departments to stay on high alert and immediately report cases to the Florida Department of Health.

There has been a sharp increase in hepatitis A cases, compared to previous years. DOH-Hillsborough is aware of 46 cases in Hillsborough County so far in 2018. In 2017, there were 11 cases and five cases reported in 2014, 2015, and 2016.

Vaccination is the best way to prevent hepatitis A. The hepatitis A vaccine is available at the DOH-Hillsborough Sulphur Springs location for \$59, unless the person is high-risk and qualifies for a free vaccine. The clinic is located at 8605 Mitchell Ave, Tampa, FL 33604 and is open weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

People who should be vaccinated for hepatitis A include:

- All children at age 1 year
- People who are experiencing homelessness
- Users of recreational drugs, whether injected or not
- Men who have sexual encounters with other men
- People with direct contact with others who have hepatitis A
- Travelers to countries where hepatitis A is common
- People with chronic or long-term liver disease, including hepatitis B or hepatitis C

- People with clotting-factor disorders
- Family and caregivers of adoptees from countries where hepatitis A is common

What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious disease that attacks the liver. People infected with hepatitis A are most contagious from two weeks before onset of symptoms to one week afterwards. Not everyone who is infected will have all the symptoms. Symptoms usually start within 28 days of exposure to the virus with a range of 15-50 days. Symptoms can include:

- Jaundice (yellowing skin and whites of eyes)
- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue/tired
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea and vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Dark-colored urine
- Pale or clay colored stool

How is hepatitis A treated or hepatitis A infection prevented?

- **Hepatitis A vaccine is the best method of preventing infection.**
- No medicines can cure the disease once symptoms appear. People with hepatitis A symptoms should seek medical care immediately.
- Most people get better over time but may need to be hospitalized.
- Previous infection with hepatitis A provides immunity for the rest of a person's life.
- People that are exposed to hepatitis A may be given vaccine or immune globulin within 14 days of exposure to prevent infection.

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