



Hepatitis A vaccine

About hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis A virus (HAV). HAV is highly contagious and found in the stool and blood of people who are infected.

It is usually spread through close, personal contact with an infected person or when a person unknowingly ingests the virus from objects, food, or drinks that are contaminated by small amounts of feces from an infected person.

Most adults who have hepatitis A have symptoms that last up to 2 months, including: fatigue, low appetite, stomach pain, nausea, jaundice (yellow skin or eyes, dark urine, light-colored bowel movements). In rare cases, liver failure and death may occur, especially in people older than age 50 and those with other liver diseases.

Most children younger than 6 years of age do not have symptoms.

A person infected with hepatitis A can transmit the disease to other people even if they don't have any symptoms of the disease. Most people who get hepatitis A feel sick for several weeks, but they usually recover completely and do not have lasting liver damage. Hepatitis A vaccine has made this disease much less common in the U.S. However, outbreaks of hepatitis A among unvaccinated people still happen.

Important details

The hepatitis A vaccine is a **2-dose** vaccine. **First dose:** 12-23 months of age. **Second dose:** at least 6 months after the first dose.

Infants 6-11 months old who travel to certain countries outside the U.S. should get 1 dose of hepatitis A vaccine. These children should still get 2 additional doses at the recommended ages for long-lasting protection.

Other children and adolescents 2-18 years of age who were not vaccinated previously should be vaccinated.

Adults who were not vaccinated previously and want to be protected against hepatitis A can also get the vaccine. If a person is not vaccinated and is exposed to someone with hepatitis A, they should get the vaccine as soon as possible and within 2 weeks of exposure.



What to expect after vaccination

It's normal to experience immune response after vaccination—this is how you know the vaccine is working. Side effects are usually mild and resolve on their own within a few days. Some normal immune responses after the hepatitis A vaccine include:

- pain, redness, or swelling at the injection site
- tiredness
- headache
- fever
- loss of appetite

People sometimes faint after medical procedures, including vaccination. Tell your provider if you feel dizzy or have vision changes or ringing in the ears. As with any medicine, there is a very small chance the vaccine will cause a severe allergic reaction, other serious injury, or death.

Tell the vaccination provider if the person getting the vaccine:

- has had an allergic reaction after a previous dose of hepatitis A vaccine
- has any severe, life-threatening allergies.
- pregnant or breastfeeding people should be vaccinated if they are at risk for getting hepatitis A. Pregnancy or breastfeeding are not reasons to avoid hepatitis A vaccination.

People who have minor illnesses, such as a cold, may be vaccinated. People who are moderately or severely ill should usually wait until they recover before getting a hepatitis A vaccine.

In some cases, your healthcare provider may decide to postpone hepatitis A vaccination until a future visit.

Hepatitis A vaccination statistics

About 3,000

hepatitis A cases are estimated to occur in the US each year

New cases have declined by 95%

since the hepatitis A vaccine became available in the U.S. in 1995. However, person-to-person outbreaks have been increasing since 2016.

Up to 1.8%

of adults 50 years or older who get hepatitis A will die

For more vaccine information, go to immunize.utah.gov or scan the QR code!

