**Hepatitis A**

1. **What is hepatitis A?**
   Hepatitis A is a highly contagious (spreads person-to-person) liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus (germ). Mild cases can last a few weeks while severe cases can last several months.

2. **How is hepatitis A spread?**
   Hepatitis A spreads by putting something in your mouth (object, food, or drink) that has been in contact with the feces (poop) of an infected person. Hepatitis A can be spread by:
   - Forgetting to wash your hands after using the bathroom or changing diapers
   - Having sexual contact with infected partner(s)
   - Consuming food or drinks that are contaminated by the virus

3. **Who is at risk for hepatitis A?**
   Anyone can get hepatitis A, but you are at higher risk if you:
   - Travel or live in countries where hepatitis A is common
   - Live with someone who has hepatitis A
   - Have a clotting-factor disease like hemophilia
   - Use recreational drugs
   - Are men who have sex with men
   - Have sexual contact with someone who has hepatitis A

4. **What are the symptoms of hepatitis A?**
   Not everyone shows symptoms. If symptoms develop, they usually appear 2 to 6 weeks after infection. Symptoms can include:
   - Fever
   - Feeling tired
   - Loss of appetite
   - Nausea
   - Vomiting
   - Stomach pain
   - Dark urine (pee)
   - Grey stool
   - Joint pain
   - Yellowing of the skin and eyes

5. **How is hepatitis A treated?**
   Treatment includes rest, good nutrition, fluids, and medical monitoring. Some people may need to be hospitalized. Most people who get hepatitis A recover completely and don’t have lasting liver damage. It’s important to see a doctor if you have symptoms of hepatitis A.

6. **How can hepatitis A be prevented?**
   The best way to prevent hepatitis A is by getting vaccinated. The hepatitis A vaccine is given as 2 shots, 6 months apart. The vaccine is safe and effective. Visit your doctor’s office, or call 2-1-1 to find a local clinic or doctor. You can also prevent the spread of hepatitis A by washing hands with soap and warm water:
   - Before eating or preparing food
   - After using the bathroom or changing diapers

Who should get vaccinated?
- All children at age 1-year
- Travelers to countries where hepatitis A is common
- Family and caregivers of adoptees from countries where hepatitis A is common
- Men who have sex with men
- Recreational drug users
- People with chronic liver disease or hepatitis B or C
- People with clotting-factor disorders

For more information:
- Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health
- California Department of Public Health
  [https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/OVHP.aspx](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/OVHP.aspx)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  [https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/index.htm)

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