

Your child may have been exposed to:

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is a viral infection of the liver.

If you think your child has hepatitis A, tell your childcare provider or call the school.

Keep your child home from childcare and school until you have talked with your local or state health department. Each situation must be looked at individually to decide if cases of hepatitis A can spread the virus to others.

For more information, call Hennepin County HSPHD-Epidemiology at 612-543-5230 or call your local health department.

Symptoms

Symptoms include dark urine (the color of tea or cola), fever, and tiredness. Your child may not want to eat. Stools may be white or gray-colored. Your child may appear jaundiced (yellowing of eyes or skin).

If your child is infected, it may take 15 to 50 days for symptoms to start (usually takes 28 days).

Spread

- By eating or drinking food or beverages contaminated with stool.
- By touching hands, objects, or surfaces, contaminated with stool.

Contagious period

From 2 weeks before to 2 weeks after symptoms start.

Call your health care provider

If someone in your home:

- has symptoms of hepatitis A. Blood tests can be done. No specific treatment is given.
- has been exposed to hepatitis A.

Prevention

- Wash hands after using the toilet and changing diapers. Wash hands before preparing food or eating. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- Clean and disinfect any objects that come in contact with stool. This includes toilets, potty chairs, sinks, toys, and diaper changing areas. Use a product that kills germs.
- In Minnesota, all children 24 months of age or older enrolled in childcare or early childhood programs must be vaccinated against hepatitis A or have a legal exemption. Hepatitis A vaccine should also be considered for groups at increased risk of hepatitis A.