



Macon County Public Health

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Press Release

Increase in Hepatitis A cases in United States

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has noticed an increase in Hepatitis A cases in the United States recently, and is encouraging people to get vaccinated. Hepatitis A is a disease that can lead to inflammation of the liver and has symptoms including: fever, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, abdominal pain, dark urine, joint pain, jaundice, etc. Although rare, Hepatitis A can sometimes lead to pancreatitis, renal disease, recurrent Hepatitis, and death. Hepatitis A is spread by person to person contact through fecal-oral route. An increase in Hepatitis A cases have been especially prominent within homeless communities as well as in people reporting drug use.

The best way to prevent Hepatitis A infection is by getting vaccinated with the Hepatitis A vaccine. Vaccines are recommended for everyone after age one, although some groups are at increased risk. Some people who are at increased risk of contracting Hepatitis A include:

- people who are traveling outside of the United States;
- people who have chronic Hepatitis B or C;
- people who use illegal drugs; or
- men who have sex with men.

Vaccines for Hepatitis A are extremely effective and available at Macon County Public Health. Some people may qualify for free Hepatitis A and B vaccines if certain risk factors apply. Please call 828-349-2081 for questions regarding any vaccination.

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