



## Health Division, Sheriff's Office Advises of Hepatitis A Exposure in Oakland County Jail

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**For Immediate Release**



HEALTH DIVISION

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**NEWS RELEASE**

L. BROOKS PATTERSON, OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Leigh-Anne Stafford, MSA

Health Officer

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PONTIAC, Mich., May 26, 2017 – A male inmate at the Oakland County Jail has a confirmed case of Hepatitis A. The Oakland County Health Division (OCHD), in collaboration with the Sheriff's Office, is advising those detained in the jail between May 8 and May 23 to contact the Health Division to determine potential exposure. The Sheriff's Office has taken the necessary steps to limit exposure in the jail.

"The jail population often comes with significant health issues, such as cases of AIDS, tuberculosis, and hepatitis," said Sheriff Michael Bouchard. "As soon as we became aware of an inmate potentially with hepatitis, the information was investigated and confirmed. We contacted the Health Division for assistance in assuring proper protocols, and efforts were immediately put into action."

Hepatitis A is an infection of the liver caused by a virus shed in feces and most commonly spread from person to person by contaminated hands.

"Areas where this inmate was housed have been sanitized, and we are taking great strides to contact anyone with possible exposure during this period of time. We are focused on combined efforts with the Health Division to ensure all steps are taken to protect the inmate population, our employees, and anyone else who came into contact with this individual," said Bouchard.

OCHD offers the Hepatitis A vaccine for \$35 per dose; however, no one will be denied access to services due to inability to pay. A discounted/sliding fee schedule is available.

"Hepatitis A is contagious but can be prevented with vaccination if given within 14 days of last exposure," said Leigh-Anne Stafford, OCHD health officer. "Our Pontiac clinic and Nurse on Call phone line will be open until 6:30 p.m. tonight and on Saturday, May 27, from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. for vaccinations and to answer any questions related to Hepatitis A."

The Pontiac clinic is located at 1200 N. Telegraph Road, Building 34 East. The Hepatitis A vaccine may also be available at some health providers, CVS Minute Clinics, and pharmacies. Call ahead to ensure your preferred provider has the vaccine available.

Residents can call Nurse on Call at 800-848-5533 to be assessed for vaccination and advised of the signs and symptoms of Hepatitis A. Regular hours for Nurse on Call are 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Health Division payment options include cash, Visa, MasterCard, some health insurances, Medicare, and/or Medicaid (no checks or money orders). Credit card fees apply. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program offers vaccines at no cost for eligible children up to 18-years-old. If you have insurance, check with your health care/insurance provider for possible benefit coverage.

Hepatitis A symptoms include sudden abdominal pain, fever, fatigue, diarrhea, nausea, headache, dark urine, light-colored bowel movements, and vomiting, followed by yellowing of the skin and eyes. Symptoms may appear from two to six weeks after exposure, with the average time being about one month. Sickness can range from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious illness lasting several months. In rare cases of Hepatitis A infection, those with a pre-existing severe illness or a compromised immune system can progress to liver failure.

To reduce the risk of contracting Hepatitis A:

- Get the Hepatitis A vaccine.
- Wash hands frequently, especially after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and before preparing and eating food. Rub hands vigorously with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds. Handwashing is essential and one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection.
- Clean and disinfect all surface areas if someone in the household or workplace

has symptoms, especially areas such as toilets, sinks, trashcans, doorknobs and faucet handles.

- Do not prepare food if you have symptoms, and refrain from food preparation for at least three days after symptoms have ended, or two weeks after onset of clinical symptoms, whichever is longer.

For more information about Hepatitis A, visit [www.oakgov.com/health](http://www.oakgov.com/health).

FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES ONLY: Please contact Leigh-Anne Stafford, health officer for Oakland County Health Division, at 248-858-1410.



NURSE ON CALL PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION HOTLINE

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