

HALTON REGION HEALTH DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
TEL: 905-825-6000 FAX: 905-825-1444

TO: Halton Physicians

Medical Chiefs of Staff: Joseph Brant Hospital, Halton Healthcare (Oakville, Milton and Georgetown Hospitals)
Chairs of: Family Practice, Paediatrics, Internal Medicine, Emergency, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Surgery
Chief of Laboratory Services and Infection Control Practitioners
Halton Midwives

POST IN: Emergency Department and Physicians Lounge

FROM: Dr. Joanna Oda, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: June 14, 2019

RE: Outbreak of Hepatitis A

The Halton Region Health Department is currently investigating an outbreak of Hepatitis A involving Oakwood Public School in Oakville. **To assist with controlling the outbreak, please take the following actions:**

Consider Hepatitis A

- Symptoms of Hepatitis A may include fever, malaise, loss of appetite, nausea, dark urine, and abdominal pain followed by jaundice or elevated aminotransferase levels within a few days. Please note that children are often asymptomatic or have mild symptoms without jaundice.
- The incubation period ranges from 15 to 50 days (average 28 to 30 days).
- Individuals with Hepatitis A are communicable for 2 weeks before symptom onset, until one week after the onset of jaundice.

Testing and Reporting

- Hepatitis A infection is confirmed by the detection of anti-HAV IgM antibodies. Antibodies are generally detectable in serum/plasma 5-10 days before symptom onset and usually decreases to undetectable levels within 6 months after onset of infection.
- **Please report clinical diagnoses of Hepatitis A to the Health Department by calling 311.** This will enable the Health Department to promptly follow up with the case and arrange for post-exposure prophylaxis for eligible contacts.
- If Hepatitis A infection is suspected, please order IgG and IgM by selecting “immune status” and “acute infection” for Hepatitis A on a Public Health Laboratory requisition. **If the patient has links to Oakwood School, please include the outbreak number “2236-2019-105” on the requisition.**

Prevention

- Household and close contacts of Hepatitis A cases are eligible to receive 1 dose of publicly-funded Hepatitis A vaccine for post-exposure prophylaxis. The Health Department may request your assistance to administer vaccine to contacts.
- Some individuals who are at increased risk of infection are also eligible to receive pre-exposure Hepatitis A vaccine. Please refer to the current [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario](#) or additional details.
- Hepatitis A is often acquired while travelling outside of Canada. Please encourage travelling patients to seek advice regarding immunization prior to departure.

Reporting

Please report all suspected or confirmed cases of [Diseases of Public Health Significance](#) (formerly Reportable Diseases) to the Halton Region Health Department as soon as possible. Diseases marked * should be reported immediately by telephone (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or fax (Mon-Fri, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm only). Other diseases can be reported the next working day. Call 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866. For general information, please visit halton.ca.

If any link provided in this memo does not work, please cut and paste it into your web browser.