

Hepatitis A

Key facts

- Hepatitis A is a viral liver disease that can cause mild to severe illness.
- It is spread by faecal-oral (or stool to mouth) transmission when a person ingests food or drink contaminated by an infected person's stool.
- The disease is closely associated with poor sanitation and a lack of personal hygiene habits, such as hand-washing.
- An estimated 1.4 million cases of hepatitis A occur annually.
- Epidemics can be explosive in growth and cause significant economic losses: 300 000 were affected in one Shanghai outbreak in 1988.

Improved sanitation and the Hepatitis A vaccine are the most effective ways to combat the disease.

Hepatitis A is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis A virus (HAV). The virus is spread when an uninfected (or unvaccinated) person eats or drinks something contaminated by the stool of an HAV-infected person: this is called faecal-oral transmission. The disease is closely associated with inadequate sanitation and poor personal hygiene. Unlike hepatitis B and C, hepatitis A infection does not cause chronic liver disease and is rarely fatal, but it can cause debilitating symptoms.

QUESTIONS: (Express your ideas)

- 1. What are the signs and symptoms of hepatitis A?**
- 2. What is the mode of transmission of Hepatitis A?**
- 3. What are the effective ways to prevent Hepatitis A?**
- 4. What are the differences of Hepatitis A to Hepatitis B and C?**
- 5. What are the treatments available for patient with hepatitis A?**

