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JOINT HEALTH ADVISORY ALAMEDA COUNTY AND CITY OF BERKELEY

HEPATITIS A Vaccine Supply Prioritization: Guidance for Healthcare Facilities and Clinicians

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A hepatitis A outbreak in San Diego, Santa Cruz and Los Angeles counties means that medical providers in Alameda County and Berkeley need to take particular precautions to:

- Raise their awareness of Hepatitis A symptoms
- Conduct additional screening questions about risk factors
- Be aware of refined priorities for Hepatitis A vaccination given that the national supply of vaccine is constrained and being prioritized and distributed based on jurisdiction, risk factors and priority groups
- REPORT all suspected and confirmed HAV cases immediately

Background:

[Outbreaks of hepatitis A](#) are ongoing in San Diego, Santa Cruz and Los Angeles counties in persons who are homeless and/or using illicit drugs, as well as [in several other states](#). With more than 600 cases to date in California alone, it has become the largest person to person (not related to a common source or contaminated food product) hepatitis A outbreak since the hepatitis A vaccine became available in 1996. As the use of adult hepatitis A vaccine has increased to help control these outbreaks, there is a national vaccine supply [shortage](#) and supply is expected to remain extremely limited through the end of 2017. Commercial and public sector orders have temporarily ceased due to lack of supply. There is currently no shortage of pediatric vaccine or Twinrix®. In response to the adult hepatitis A vaccine shortage, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has declared a [State of Emergency](#) and CDPH has acquired a reserve supply and assumed control of all adult Hepatitis A vaccine supply. Vaccine is being prioritized to areas of highest risk where there is ongoing local transmission or outbreak associated cases for outbreak containment.

Alameda County and City of Berkeley do *not* have local transmission of hepatitis A or outbreak associated cases at this time. Therefore, we are not currently able to receive any vaccine for outbreak prevention purposes. This is a dynamic situation that could change at any moment.

Situation in California:

- As of 10/20/17, San Diego County reported 516 HAV cases & 19 deaths since November 2016.
 - In Santa Cruz County, at least 73 cases have been reported since April 2017.
- CA DPH issued a [Clinical Advisory](#) on 10/19 regarding the extremely limited vaccine supply and referred providers to local health departments for guidance regarding prioritization of use of available vaccine.

Situation in Alameda County including the City of Berkeley:

- No hepatitis A cases linked to outbreaks in San Diego, Santa Cruz, or Los Angeles
- No evidence of ongoing hepatitis A transmission or outbreaks in the county
- 12 cases in Alameda County and 1 case in City of Berkeley reported this year to date – within historical ranges for our jurisdictions
- Alameda County & City of Berkeley Public Health cannot launch vaccine campaigns in the field for high risk populations until Hepatitis A vaccine is available.

Current Alameda County & City of Berkeley Recommendations on Who to vaccinate with adult Hepatitis A vaccine:

1. **Post-exposure prophylaxis is the highest priority to contain transmission**
 - Persons who were exposed to a case of hepatitis A (household/sexual contact)
2. **Preventive/pre-exposure prophylaxis *if* you have adequate vaccine supply in your facility** (this summarizes [ACIP](#) and Alameda County & Berkeley recommendations)
 - Persons using illicit drugs*
 - Men who have sex with men*
 - Persons with chronic liver disease*
 - Persons traveling to or working in [countries where hepatitis A is common](#)*
 - Persons currently experiencing homelessness*
3. **Prevention/pre-exposure in the following occupational groups ONLY if your facility has already acquired vaccine supply for this purpose:**
 - Pre-hospital health care providers (EMTs, Paramedics)*
 - Sanitation workers & environmental services staff*
 - Other personnel whose duties are also likely to expose them to potentially infected feces or feces contaminated objects from patients or clients who are homeless &/or illicit drug-users*

(Healthcare personnel are not considered at higher risk of HAV infection when appropriate infection control precautions are followed)

*Consider using combined hepatitis A/B vaccine ([Twinrix®](#)) if patient is in a group recommended for hepatitis B preventive vaccination as well.

4. At this time, do not give hepatitis A vaccine to individuals who are not in one of the above risk groups for Hepatitis A.

If you exhaust your hepatitis A vaccine supply, consider creating a recall list of patients in risk groups who present to you so that they can be contacted when supply becomes available in the future.

Continue to REPORT immediately all suspected and confirmed HAV cases in homeless or illicit drug users to ACPHD Acute Communicable Disease section by calling 510-267-3250, M-F 8:30a-5p, or after hours call: 925-422-7595. For Berkeley residents only, contact the Berkeley Communicable Disease program by calling 510-981-5292.

Other Prevention/Hygiene & Infection Control recommendations:

Hepatitis A virus (HAV) is transmitted by the fecal-oral route. HAV is hardy in the environment, can live for months outside the human body, and is difficult to inactivate. Ensure appropriate cleaning of HAV patients areas with a hospital grade cleaner/disinfectant effective against hepatitis A. *Waterless hand sanitizers are not effective*, ensure healthcare personnel practice proper hand hygiene with soap and water for at least 20 sec before and after patient care, after eating, and after using the restroom. Standard precautions should be used in health care settings when caring for continent patients with confirmed or suspected hepatitis A infection. Contact and Standard precautions should be used in health care settings in the care of diapered or incontinent HAV patients.

Resources:

- Alameda County Public Health Department – Hepatitis A: <http://www.acphd.org/hepa.aspx>
- City of Berkeley Public Health Department: <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/publichealth/>
- CDPH Hepatitis A website: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Hepatitis-A.aspx>
- CDPH Hepatitis A Outbreak website: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Hepatitis-A-Outbreak.aspx>
- CDPH Clinical Advisory – Limited Adult Vaccine Supply (10/19/17): <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/Immunization/CDPH-HAVProviderGuidanceUpdate.pdf>
- CDPH All Facilities Summary Letter (10/17/17): <https://www.calhospital.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/afl-17-21.pdf>
- CDPH Postexposure Prophylaxis guidance: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/Immunization/HepatitisA-PEPQuicksheet.pdf>
- CDC Hepatitis A: <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/index.htm>
<https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/outbreaks/2017March-HepatitisA.htm>