



# SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

GAIL NEWEL, MD, MPH  
HEALTH OFFICER

JAMES A. RYDINGSWORD  
AGENCY DIRECTOR

**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**  
*Healthy People in Healthy Communities*

## PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

Date: 13 September 2017

To: Employees and Volunteers Serving the Population at Risk for Hepatitis A

From: Gail Newel, MD, MPH, San Benito County Public Health Officer

Subject: Hepatitis A Vaccinations

### **Background:**

San Diego and Santa Cruz Counties are currently experiencing outbreaks of hepatitis A infection, mostly among homeless persons and/or users of injection or non-injection illicit drugs. Case numbers in both of those counties continue to rise, and additional cases due to the same strain of virus have been identified in other California jurisdictions as well as in Arizona and Utah. In San Diego, 15 deaths have occurred due to this hepatitis A outbreak, and the majority of infected individuals have required hospitalization.

Although we have not yet identified a case of hepatitis A in San Benito County in 2017, we know that we are at risk. The at-risk populations are transient, and Santa Cruz County is a close neighbor. For this reason, San Benito County Public Health Services is taking a proactive stance to prevent an outbreak situation in our local jurisdiction.

### **Recommendation for preventive vaccination against hepatitis A virus (HAV):**

Most of the hepatitis A cases share one or more of the following characteristics: illicit drug use (injection and non-injection), homelessness, and/or dense living conditions. However, there have been cases in people whose only risk factor is contact with the aforementioned population. Some occupational groups at risk are medical staff, custodial services, first responders, case managers and other occupations that have close contact with the major risk groups. These occupational groups are advised to get vaccinated against hepatitis A. Public Health Services is working with our community partners to ensure HAV vaccination of at-risk populations and those who serve them.

The San Benito County Health Officer is recommending that all employees and volunteers who have close contact with the at-risk populations be offered Hepatitis A vaccination.

Under the Affordable Care Act, HAV vaccines are covered as preventive care without a deductible or co-pay charge:

**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**  
439 Fourth Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-637-5367

**MEDICAL THERAPY UNIT**  
761 South Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-637-1989

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**  
351 Tres Pinos Road, Suite C-1  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-636-4035

**HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS**  
439 Fourth Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-637-5367

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Employees and Volunteers Serving the Population at Risk for Hepatitis A  
Hepatitis A Vaccinations

Employees and volunteers who have close contact with the at-risk populations should be encouraged to seek HAV vaccination with their personal physician or pharmacy. The Health Officer's recommendations align with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) as well as the California Department of Public Health's recent All Facilities Health Notification.

For more information:

<https://www.hhs.gov/hepatitis/policies-and-guidelines/affordable-care-act/index.html>

<https://archive.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/facilities/Documents/LNC-AFL-17-13.pdf>

**Should Hepatitis A exposure occur in a non-vaccinated individual:**

Should an employee or volunteer who is not immune to Hepatitis A come in close contact with a confirmed or suspected HAV case, post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) should be given. The first responder should seek care with their personal physician. Susceptible people exposed to HAV should receive a dose of single-antigen HAV vaccine or intramuscular (IM) immune globulin (IG) (0.02 mL/kg), or both, as soon as possible within 2 weeks of exposure.

Detailed information on PEP may be found on the CDPH Hepatitis A Post-exposure Prophylaxis Guidance Quicksheet (updated August 2016):

[https://archive.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/CDPH\\_HAV%20PEP%20Clinical%20Guidance.pdf](https://archive.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/CDPH_HAV%20PEP%20Clinical%20Guidance.pdf)

**For more information:**

<https://archive.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/CDPHHAVQuicksheet.pdf>

<https://archive.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Documents/FoodborneHepatitisAFactSheet.pdf>

If you have questions or information regarding possible cases please call Public Health Services at (831) 637-5367.