

## **Hepatitis A identified in restaurant employee**

Toronto Public Health (TPH) has confirmed a case of Hepatitis A in a food handler who works at Sierra Grill restaurant, 2901 Bayview Avenue (at Sheppard Ave). The individual acquired the infection while travelling outside of Canada. The food handler worked while ill and during the infectious period. Individuals who ate at the restaurant on January 23, 2011 may have been exposed and should be offered post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) if it can be given on or before February 6, 2011.

Vaccination or immune globulin (IG), administered within two weeks of exposure, are effective prophylactic measures to prevent infection. Hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for PEP in preference to IG. IG is the preferred PEP for: persons with a history of anaphylactic reaction to Hepatitis A vaccine; OR infants <12 months of age; OR currently pregnant; OR immune-compromised; OR have chronic liver disease.

Toronto Public Health will hold three Hepatitis A vaccination clinics for anyone who ate at the Sierra Grill on January 23, 2011. The vaccine is free. All clinics will be held in the North York Memorial Hall, 5110 Yonge Street, at the following times:

Thursday January 27	Gold Room	4 pm - 8 pm
Friday January 28	Gold Room	4 pm - 8 pm
Saturday January 29	Burgundy Room	10 am - 2 pm

Hepatitis A virus causes fever, malaise, anorexia, nausea, and abdominal discomfort and these symptoms are often followed by jaundice. The clinical severity ranges from mild and lasting only one to two weeks to a disabling disease lasting months. The virus is spread through person to person contact by the fecal-oral route. The incubation period for someone who has been exposed to the virus averages 28 to 30 days (range 15 to 50 days). TPH receives reports for an average of 59 Toronto cases per year (based on last 10 years).

If you suspect Hepatitis A in a patient, please collect a serum sample for anti-HAV IgM and anti-HAV total antibody.

The vaccine is available free from Toronto Public Health for all persons receiving it as a result of this exposure.

**Please report any suspect or confirmed cases of HAV to Toronto public health by calling our main surveillance phone line at 416-392-7411 (work hours) or 311 (after hours).**