

Easy B Facts

What Is Hepatitis A?

The hepatitis A virus (HAV for short) lives in feces (stools or poop). The main way you can get hepatitis A is by getting hepatitis A-infected poop into your mouth. Other ways you can get it are by eating raw or undercooked shellfish, having anal-oral sex (rimming), and from drinking contaminated water that has raw sewage (poop) in it.

The hepatitis A virus attacks the liver.

In adults it can cause many symptoms including feeling tired, feeling sick to the stomach, vomiting, fever, diarrhea, and dark urine. Many children have no symptoms – that's why it spreads so quickly to so many children in daycare centers. The good thing about hepatitis A is that if you get it your body will eventually fight it off and you will not have problems with HAV in the future.

Preventing Hepatitis A . . .

- ◆ Get vaccinated against hepatitis A if you have NOT already been infected. The vaccine is safe and will protect you from getting it.
- ◆ If you have hepatitis B (HBV for short) it is even more important that you get the hepatitis A vaccine – you do not want to get another liver disease on top of HBV.
- ◆ Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially before preparing food, after using the toilet or anytime you get poop on your hands.
- ◆ Practice safer sex!



HBV ADVOCATE
www.hbvadvocate.org

**Hepatitis C
Support Project**

VERSION 1.0 • February 2010

Alan Franciscus