



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Thomas Farley, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

2013 Alert # 8

UPDATE: Exposure to Hepatitis A in patrons of Alta Restaurant

Please Share this Alert with All Clinical Staff in Emergency Medicine, Primary Care, Infectious Diseases, Family Medicine, and Infection Control Staff

- A patient with hepatitis A worked as food handler at Alta restaurant, located at 64 West 10th Street in Greenwich Village in Manhattan.
- The Health Department recommends that all restaurant patrons who ate dessert at Alta from March 23rd to April 2nd receive hepatitis A vaccine as soon as possible.
- Restaurant patrons may be treated at their medical provider's office according to the recommendations below, or may receive the vaccine at a special clinic operated by the Health Department.
- Restaurant patrons unable to receive vaccine should receive immune globulin.

April 5, 2013

Dear Providers:

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is investigating a case of hepatitis A in a food handler who prepared desserts at Alta restaurant in Manhattan. We are recommending that all people who ate dessert at the restaurant from March 23rd- April 2nd receive hepatitis A vaccine. Patients unable to receive vaccine should receive immune globulin.

The Health Department will offer free hepatitis A vaccine to restaurant patrons and employees starting tomorrow at the Chelsea Health Center, 303 Ninth Avenue, 3rd floor in Manhattan at the following times:

- Saturday, April 6, 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.
- Sunday, April 7, 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.
- Monday, April 8, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Additional information about the clinic location and hours is available through 311.

Restaurant patrons may also receive vaccine at their medical provider's office. Hepatitis A vaccine is an inactivated vaccine. There are two licensed hepatitis A vaccine products available: Havrix[®] from GlaxoSmithKline and VAQTA[®] from Merck. Each vaccine is available as a pediatric formulation (licensed for persons 1 through 18 years of age, 0.5 mL given IM) and an adult formulation (licensed for persons 19 years and older, 1.0 mL given IM). Both vaccines are highly immunogenic and effective in preventing clinical hepatitis.

Contraindications to hepatitis A vaccine include history of a severe, allergic (anaphylactic) reaction to a prior dose either of the vaccine or to a vaccine component. Relevant allergies include alum or neomycin

or, in the case of Havrix, 2-phenoxyethanol, a preservative used in the vaccine. Persons with a severe allergic reaction to latex, should not receive VAQTA (vials or pre-filled syringes) or pre-filled syringes of Havrix. Persons unable to receive vaccine, including infants less than 1 years of age, should receive an appropriate dose of immune globulin (0.02 mL /kg).

For women who are pregnant, immune globulin is preferred over hepatitis A vaccination. The safety of hepatitis A vaccination during pregnancy has not been determined; however, because hepatitis A vaccine is produced from inactivated HAV, the theoretic risk to the developing fetus is expected to be low. The risk associated with vaccination should be weighed against the risk for hepatitis A in pregnant women who might be at high risk for exposure to HAV.

Because hepatitis A vaccine is inactivated, no special precautions need to be taken when vaccinating immune-compromised persons.

A complete hepatitis vaccine series is 2 doses, given at least 6 months apart. Persons who have previously received two valid doses of hepatitis A vaccine, do not need to receive any additional doses. Persons who only received 1 prior dose of vaccine, should receive the second dose, as long as it has been at least 6 months.

Additional information about Hepatitis A vaccine may be found at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/hepa.html>

Vaccine Information Statements to provide to patients can be found at

http://www.immunize.org/vis/vis_hepatitis_a.asp and are available in 17 languages in addition to English.

For the next 6 weeks, DOHMH asks providers to suspect hepatitis A in any patrons of this restaurant and to report cases promptly.

Cases can be reported to us as follows:

Business hours: Bureau of Communicable Disease

(347)396-2600

After hours: the Poison Control Center

(212) 764-7667 or (800) 222-1222

As always, we appreciate your continued assistance in addressing emerging disease issues.

Sincerely,

Jane R Zucker, MD, MSc

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc, Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Immunization

Sharon Balter, MD

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