

# For Health Professionals

## Health Alerts

### Health Alert Advisory #135 - Hepatitis A - June 29, 2005

#### BACKGROUND:

Four Erie County (NY) residents have been diagnosed with Hepatitis A virus (HAV). These cases were reported to the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) between June 24-29, 2005. All three cases had symptom onsets between June 11-21, 2005. ECDOH has launched an epidemiologic investigation to assess these cases. To date, no correlation has been established among these cases. However, this cluster of HAV cases exceed normal parameters in Erie County. Therefore, the ECDOH is advising physicians and health care providers to be on the lookout for patients experiencing symptoms consistent with viral hepatitis. The symptoms, which typically occur 2 - 6 weeks after exposure, may include fatigue, poor appetite, fever, abdominal pain and vomiting. Urine may become darker in color, and jaundice may appear. Infants and young children tend to have mild symptoms and are less likely to develop jaundice than are older children and adults.

For additional information on Hepatitis A Virus, please visit the following links:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis/a/index.htm>

[http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/communicable\\_diseases/en/hepat.htm](http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/communicable_diseases/en/hepat.htm)

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

For patients experiencing viral hepatitis symptoms, a complete hepatitis profile is recommended (serologic markers for Hepatitis A Virus, Hepatitis B Virus and Hepatitis C Virus) along with liver function testing (i.e. AST and ALT).

Recommendations for household contacts of persons exposed to a known case of Hepatitis A Virus diagnosed by a medical provider include administration of Immune Globulin within 14 days of contact with the case. The ECDOH, Bureau of Disease Control, will assist with administering the Immune Globulin. Physicians should call (716) 858-7697, Monday - Friday, 8:30am to 4:00pm or MERS at (716) 898-4225 after hours.