



CHEMUNG COUNTY

Department of Health

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Chemung County Health
Department

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Fast Food Employee Confirmed with Hepatitis A Virus; Elmira Heights Dunkin Donuts Customers During Specific Timeframe May Have Been Exposed

Chemung County Health Department Director Peter Buzzetti announced a case of Hepatitis A virus in a local restaurant worker. The Health Department has launched a disease investigation of a Schuyler County resident that worked at two area Dunkin Donuts while infectious. Director Buzzetti said, "We have been working closely with the Schuyler County Public Health Department and New York State Department of Health after receiving notification of the suspected case." Following laboratory testing, interviews and a restaurant inspection, an employee who handles food at Dunkin Donuts on Corning Road (Miracle Mile) in Elmira Heights was identified with the Hepatitis A virus. The worker also worked one day at the Dunkin Donuts in the Walmart store on County Road 64 in Horseheads. The establishments have been notified of the potential exposure and the employee has not worked since February 11th. Additionally, the Health Department has advised the manager to send any staff reporting Hepatitis A virus related symptoms for medical evaluation before returning to work. Employees of the restaurant will be offered post exposure prophylaxis (PEP). Dunkin Donuts in Elmira Heights will be subject to additional inspections over the coming weeks and is complying with NYSDOH recommendations.

Register for Free Hep A Vaccine

As a result of this potential Hepatitis A virus exposure, the Chemung County Health Department is advising anyone who ate food or drinks via dine-in, takeout, delivery or utilized the restroom at Dunkin Donuts in Elmira Heights (2501 Corning Rd., Elmira Heights, NY 14903) on **February 9 or February 11, 2021 to receive free Hepatitis A vaccine from the Chemung County Health Department** to prevent potentially exposed individuals from becoming infected. Masks are required at the clinic. The vaccination clinic will be held at:

Where: Mass Vaccination Clinic, 17 Aviation Dr., Horseheads, NY 14845

When: Saturday February 20th from 9 am to Noon and Sunday, February 21st Noon to 3 pm

Those attending the Clinic are encouraged to pre-register to save time during the onsite registration process. ***Pre-registration may be completed prior to arrival by visiting, www.chemungcountyny.gov/HepA*** and look for the pre-registration links. "We encourage those who may have been exposed during these specific timeframes to visit the clinic to receive free post exposure prophylaxis," stated Public Health Director Peter Buzzetti.

Monitor Your Symptoms

Those who ate food or drinks via dine-in, takeout, delivery or utilized the restroom at **either Dunkin Donuts locations between January 26, 2021 and February 5, 2021 may have been exposed but will not benefit from Hepatitis A vaccine to prevent infection from this exposure** and are encouraged to monitor themselves and their families for symptoms for 50 days after consuming the food. Those who develop symptoms suggestive of Hepatitis A virus should seek medical evaluation. Symptoms of Hepatitis A virus can include:

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Dark urine
- Clay-colored stools
- Joint pain

- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes)

The disease is rarely fatal and most people recover in a few weeks without any complications. Adults have signs and symptoms of illness more often than children. Infants and young children tend to have very mild symptoms and are less likely to develop jaundice than are older children and adults. Not everyone who is infected will have all of the symptoms.

Facts about Hepatitis A:

- Hepatitis A is a highly contagious liver infection caused by the Hepatitis A virus. It can range from no symptoms at all, to a mild illness lasting a few weeks, to a severe illness lasting several months. Although rare, Hepatitis A can cause death in some people.
- Hepatitis A usually spreads when a person unknowingly ingests the virus from objects, food, or drinks contaminated by small, undetected amounts of stool from an infected person. This can happen from eating at a restaurant, sharing food or drink, or eating when traveling in one of the many countries outside the United States with a high Hepatitis A infection rate.
- Those with a past infection from Hepatitis A cannot be re-infected. He or she is immune for life and does not continue to carry the virus.
- People who are most at risk of Hepatitis A include:
 - People with direct contact with someone who has a Hepatitis A infection. This can occur up to 2 weeks before the infected person develops symptoms, so you may not be aware of your exposure at the time.
 - Travelers to countries where Hepatitis A is common, which include most countries outside the United States. More information is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's web site: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/hepatitis-a>
 - Men who have sexual contact with men,
 - People who use drugs, both injection and non-injection drugs, and
 - Homeless individuals

For more information about Hepatitis A, visit:

https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/hepatitis/hepatitis_a/food_service_workers_fact_sheet.htm

Co-administration with other vaccines including the COVID-19 vaccine

Given the lack of data on the safety and efficacy of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines administered simultaneously with other vaccines, the vaccine series should routinely be administered alone, with a minimum interval of 14 days before or after administration with any other vaccine. However, mRNA COVID-19 and other vaccines *may be administered within a shorter period in situations where the benefits of vaccination are deemed to outweigh the potential unknown risks* of vaccine co-administration such as a hepatitis A vaccination during an outbreak.

If you have questions regarding the Hepatitis A potential exposure and/or the scheduled Clinic, please contact the Chemung County Health Department at 607-737-2028.