



PHARMACIST

POCKET GUIDE:

HEPATITIS A VACCINE

Who should get vaccinated?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the hepatitis A vaccine to appropriate unvaccinated adults who are at risk for hepatitis A virus infection. According to the CDC, some examples of these groups include^{1,2}:

- International travelers to regions with increased rates of hepatitis A
- People with chronic liver disease
- Users of injection and non-injection drugs
- People experiencing homelessness
- Men who have sex with men

Please refer to the CDC's Pink Book and the ACIP Schedule for the complete hepatitis A vaccination recommendations and full list of special situations recommended for hepatitis A vaccination.^{1,2}

ACIP=Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

Who should not get vaccinated?

Do not give the hepatitis A vaccine if your patient¹:

- Has ever had a severe allergic reaction after a dose of hepatitis A vaccine, or has a severe allergy to any part of the vaccine
- Has a moderate or severe acute illness. Vaccination should be deferred until the person's condition has improved

International travel and hepatitis A

- In the United States, an important risk factor for contracting hepatitis A, among others, is international travel³

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International travel and hepatitis A (cont'd)

- According to the CDC, persons traveling to countries that have high or intermediate rates of hepatitis A should be vaccinated before traveling³
- The risk for hepatitis A exists even for travelers to urban areas, those who stay in luxury hotels, and those who report that they are careful about what they drink and eat⁴
- Some travel experts advise people traveling outside the United States to consider vaccination against hepatitis A regardless of their destination³

Chronic liver disease and hepatitis A

- Patients with chronic liver disease are not at increased risk for hepatitis A virus infection; however, they are at increased risk for complications should they become infected¹
- Complications among patients with chronic liver disease include fulminant hepatitis A (rapid onset of liver failure), which is often fatal¹
- The CDC recommends that appropriate patients with chronic liver disease receive hepatitis A vaccination^{1,2}

References: 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases. Hamborsky J, Kroger A, Wolfe S, eds. 13th ed. Washington D.C. Public Health Foundation, 2015. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/index.html>. Reviewed June 29, 2018. Accessed June 27, 2019. 2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Recommended Immunization Schedule for Adults Aged 19 Years or Older, United States, 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/adult/adult-combined-schedule.pdf>. Updated February 5, 2019. Accessed June 27, 2019. 3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC Yellow Book 2018. <https://www.wnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/yellowbook-home>. Updated June 31, 2017. Accessed June 27, 2019. 4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hepatitis A Questions and Answers for Health Professionals. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/havfaq.htm>. Updated May 8, 2019. Accessed June 27, 2019.



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HAVBROC190001 July 2019
Produced in USA. 0002-0002-55