



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF

HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

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Commissioner

2014 Alert #6

Hepatitis A Associated with Travel to Tulum, Mexico

Please Share this Alert with all Clinical Staff in Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Obstetrics, Emergency Medicine, Primary Care, Infectious Diseases, Family Medicine, and Infection Control

- As of May 1, 2015, 27 cases of hepatitis A infection have been reported among United States travelers who went to Tulum, Mexico; 11 of the 27 are New York City residents.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a travel advisory recommending vaccination against hepatitis A before travel to Tulum, Mexico.
- CDC and the Health Department recommend that all people who traveled to Tulum, Mexico and returned within the last 14 days receive one dose of hepatitis A vaccine.

May 5, 2015

Dear Providers,

As of May 2, 2015, 27 cases of hepatitis A infection have been reported among United States travelers to Tulum, Mexico. CDC has issued a Level 1 Travel Advisory recommending hepatitis A vaccination for all previously unimmunized individuals who plan to travel to Tulum, Mexico. To date, 11 cases have been reported among New York City travelers to Tulum. In addition, CDC and the Health Department recommend that all people who traveled to Tulum, Mexico and returned within the last 14 days receive one dose of hepatitis A vaccine, which can prevent or reduce the symptoms of hepatitis A if given within 14 days of exposure.

Contraindications to hepatitis A vaccine include history of reaction to the vaccine or vaccine components. Special considerations should be taken for two populations: women who are pregnant and people with immune-compromising conditions.

Pregnancy

In women who are pregnant, gamma globulin is preferred over hepatitis A vaccination. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices says, "Hepatitis A vaccine should not be administered to persons with a history of a severe allergic reaction to a previous dose of hepatitis A vaccine or to a vaccine component. The safety of hepatitis A vaccination during pregnancy has not been determined; however, because hepatitis A vaccine is produced from inactivated hepatitis A virus, 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 hepatitis A virus."

Immune-compromised persons

Because hepatitis A vaccine is inactivated, no special precautions need to be taken when vaccinating immune-compromised persons. Nevertheless, the Health Department recommends that individuals with immune-compromising conditions who traveled to Tulum during the specified period consult with their physicians about receiving both vaccine and gamma globulin.

Reporting Cases

Providers should suspect hepatitis A infection in any ill persons who report travel to Tulum, Mexico. When evaluating for hepatitis A, clinicians should test for hepatitis A IgM and check liver function tests. Confirmed cases should be promptly reported to the Health Department by calling 1-866-692-3641

Additional information on the travel advisory and hepatitis A can be found at the CDC website at:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/hepatitis-a-mexico>
<http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HAV/index.htm>.

Sincerely,
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