

Posted on: January 7, 2022

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES UPDATE ON HEPATITIS A OUTBREAK



NORRISTOWN, PA – The [Montgomery County Office of Public Health](#) (OPH) announced today the temporary closure of Gino's Ristorante & Pizzeria in West Norriton in relation to a Hepatitis A Virus (HAV) outbreak in the county. The restaurant will be closed until further notice while the investigation continues.

Per standard public health protocols, OPH coordinated with the Pennsylvania Department of Health to issue a [health advisory on Wednesday](#). As a result, OPH continues to receive additional information to support its investigation and identify additional potential cases. Investigation conducted to date suggests the exposure occurred in late November no longer presents a risk. However, additional investigation into probable cases resulting from the health advisory associated with this outbreak are underway. In the interest of public health, the restaurant has been shut down until further notice.

At this time, 11 total cases are under investigation, with 9 confirmed cases of Hepatitis A and 2 potential cases of Hepatitis A. Of the 9 confirmed cases, 7 people were hospitalized. To date, one death is confirmed and one additional death is under investigation.

The source of the outbreak remains under investigation. Anyone experiencing symptoms of Hepatitis A should contact their doctor.

SYMPTOMS

Not everyone with Hepatitis A has symptoms. Adults are more likely to have symptoms than children. If symptoms develop, they usually appear two to seven weeks (15-50 days), an average of 28-30 days after infection. Symptoms usually last less than two months, although some people can be ill for as long as six months.

If symptoms develop, they can include:

- Yellow skin or eyes
- Not wanting to eat
- Upset stomach
- Throwing up
- Stomach pain
- Fever
- Dark urine or light-colored stools
- Diarrhea
- Joint pain
- Feeling tired

Many people, especially children, have no symptoms but can still spread the infection. In addition, a person can transmit Hepatitis A to others up to two weeks before symptoms appear.

ABOUT HEPATITIS A

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious, vaccine-preventable, liver infection caused by the Hepatitis A Virus (HAV) ranging in severity from mild infection lasting a few weeks to severe disease lasting several months. Hepatitis A usually spreads through close, personal contact with an infected person or when a person unknowingly ingests the virus from objects, food or drinks that are contaminated by small amounts of stool (feces) from an infected person. A person infected with hepatitis A can transmit the disease to other people even if he or she does not have any symptoms of the disease.

PREVENTION OF HEPATITIS A

The best way to prevent Hepatitis A is through vaccination with the Hepatitis A vaccine. To get the full benefit of the Hepatitis A vaccine, more than one shot is needed. The number and timing of these shots depends on the type of vaccine you are given. Practicing good hand hygiene—including thoroughly washing hands after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and before preparing or eating food—plays an important role in preventing the spread of Hepatitis A.

For a full overview of Hepatitis A, visit the [CDC website](#).

Media Contact: Kelly Cofrancisco, kcofrancisco@montcopa.org