



NEWS



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McLean County Health Department Offering Free (or Reduced Cost) Hepatitis A Vaccine for People At-Risk

BLOOMINGTON – The McLean County Health Department, in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Public Health, is offering free (reduced cost) hepatitis A vaccine to people at the greatest risk of becoming infected in our community. Although there are currently no outbreaks in Illinois, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has reported hepatitis A outbreaks in states across the county, including neighboring states.

Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable disease of the liver caused by the hepatitis A virus. It is usually spread from person-to-person through contaminated food or water. According to the CDC, the major risk factors associated with the recent outbreaks include drug use (injection and non-injections), homelessness, or both.

The Health Department is offering individuals at highest risk of acquiring infection free (or reduced cost) hepatitis A vaccinations. Those deemed at highest risk for contracting hepatitis A are:

- people who use injection/non-injection drugs
- men who have sex with men
- homeless individuals or those who have contact with homeless individuals
- people who have been recently incarcerated
- people who have ongoing, close contact with any of the above mentioned risk groups
- people with chronic liver disease;
- people who are contacts to a confirmed case of hepatitis A

-More-

Anyone within one of the highest risk categories is encouraged to contact the Health Department at 309-888-5435 to confirm your eligibility and make an appointment to get a free hepatitis A vaccination. More information about hepatitis A can be found on the Illinois Department of Public Health's website: <http://www.idph.state.il.us/public/hb/hbhepa.htm>.

The McLean County Health Department is dedicated to the prevention and control of disease through health promotion, early intervention and health protection within our county. For more information about our services visit our website at: <https://health.mcleancountyil.gov/>. You are also invited to follow us on Twitter (@McLeanHealth) and "Like" us on Facebook (Facebook.com/McLeanHealth), for information about public health affecting you.

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