



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

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Circulation: all GPs in London

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Dear GP,

Re: Outbreak of Hepatitis A among men who have sex with men (MSM)

An outbreak control team has been established to investigate an ongoing outbreak of *Hepatitis A* in London amongst men who have sex with men (MSM). To date there have been 49 cases in London.

We are working with partners, including GPs, to control the outbreak. This includes contact tracing to identify and vaccinate those at risk of onward transmission, working with GUM clinics to offer vaccinations to individuals at risk, and communication to MSM via the media and key agencies.

Recommended action for GPs

- **Consider diagnosis of Hepatitis A** if men who have sex with men (MSM) consult with symptoms of hepatitis and test as appropriate.
- **Notify all cases of Hepatitis A promptly by phone** to the Health Protection Team (HPT) so that they can ask investigate the source by asking about possible food, travel, sexual and other exposures and reduce spread by advising on exclusion and post-exposure prophylaxis. Health Protection Team contact details are here <https://www.gov.uk/health-protection-team> (enter the postcode of the patient's residence) and at the end of this letter.
- **Please facilitate timely post exposure vaccination** if the Health Protection Team recommends it for your patient. Immunisation within 14 days of significant exposure to a known case can prevent the development of hepatitis A in a contact. Spread is faeco-oral so significant exposures may be household, sexual or around food handling. Your local HPT will give detailed advice about individual contacts. We may additionally recommend Immunoglobulin or advise vaccination longer after exposure, depending on individual circumstances.
- **Provide advice to MSM** diagnosed with *Hepatitis A*, including: washing hands thoroughly when preparing and eating food, after going to the toilet and before and after sex, and safer sex advice. We enclose a leaflet to assist with this, which will also be useful for MSM who have not acquired Hepatitis A but whose sexual activities could put them at risk.

Many thanks for your assistance in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Simone Thorn Heathcock
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North East North Central HPT
NMC 94I2990E

Miranda Mindlin
Consultant in Communicable Disease Control
South London HPT
GMC 3292365

Phone numbers for Health Protection Teams (by borough of residence of patient):

South London Health Protection Team

0344 326 2052

For residents of boroughs Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Wandsworth, Greenwich, Croydon, Sutton, Merton, Richmond, Kingston, Bexley, Bromley

North West London Health Protection Team

020 3326 1658

For residents of boroughs Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster

North East North Central London Health Protection Team

020 3837 7084 (option 1)

For residents of boroughs Barnet, Barking & Dagenham, Camden, City of London, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Havering, Islington, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest