



As you may have seen in the news, Nashville is experiencing an outbreak of Hepatitis A, a virus that impacts the liver. People experiencing homelessness are one of the groups most at risk because it can be difficult to practice good hygiene. Room In The Inn has made a concerted effort with partners such as the Metro Department of Public Health and Neighborhood Health to vaccinate as many of our guests as possible. While this outbreak should not be cause for alarm for Room In The Inn congregations, you can do your part to prevent the spread of Hepatitis A in our community.

**Hepatitis A** is a vaccine-preventable liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus. Common symptoms include: fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, jaundice (yellowing of eyes and skin), and clay-colored stools. The disease can be severe in some people, possibly requiring hospitalization. Most recover completely within a few weeks. Hepatitis A usually spreads when a person unknowingly ingests the virus from objects, food, or drinks contaminated by small, undetected amounts of stool from an infected person. Hepatitis A can also spread from close personal contact with an infected person such as through sex or caring for someone who is ill. The best way to prevent hepatitis A is through vaccination.

For more information visit <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/index.htm>

Frequent updates on Nashville's outbreak are available at <http://health.nashville.gov>

## Best Practices for Good Health

- Hand washing is one of the best ways to prevent Hepatitis A and other infectious diseases. Have plenty of antibacterial soap and hand sanitizer available for both guests and volunteers.
- Volunteers preparing or serving a meal should take special care to wash their hands thoroughly.
- Make sure all food is completely cooked and all produce washed carefully.
- Be sure there are enough grooming supplies, hygiene items, and linens for each individual guest.
- Have latex gloves and bleach available in case you need to clean up after an emergency.



## Hepatitis A Vaccination



There is a very effective vaccine for Hepatitis A. Your medical provider can give you more information. Many insurance plans cover the vaccine with no co-pay or deductible if administered by an in-network provider. Vaccines are available at walk-in clinics such as those operated by Walgreens, Vanderbilt Health, CVS, and Kroger. A list of free options for those who are uninsured is available at [health.nashville.gov](http://health.nashville.gov).