HEPATITIS A

HEALTH ALERT FOR GAY AND BI– AND OTHER MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN

3 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT HEPATITIS A

- Hepatitis A (hep A) has been spreading among gay, bi– and men who have sex with men in King County and across the U.S. and in Europe.
- Hepatitis A can cause severe liver disease that can last for months. On rare occasions, it can lead to liver failure and death.
- A hepatitis A vaccine can prevent you from getting hepatitis A.

HEPATITIS A SPREADS EASILY

Many people don’t know they have hepatitis A so they spread it without knowing. The virus spreads when tiny, undetectable amounts of feces (poop) get into your mouth. You can get it from:

- Having any kind of sexual activity with someone who has hepatitis A (not just oral sex)
- Sharing needles, pipes, or other items to take drugs
- Swallowing food or drinks contaminated with the virus or touching contaminated objects and then putting your hands in your mouth

HOW CAN YOU PREVENT HEPATITIS A?

- Get 2 shots of hepatitis A vaccine. You can get hepatitis A shots from your doctor or clinic. Most pharmacies offer the hep A shots if you have an insurance card. [kingcounty.gov/hepA/alert](http://kingcounty.gov/hepA/alert)
- Don’t share food, drinks, needles, or smokes with other people.
- Don’t share personal items like sex toys, towels and utensils.
- Don’t have sex with someone who has hepatitis A. Condoms and other measures to prevent STDs do not prevent hep A.
- Wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet and before you cook or eat.
SYMPTOMS OF HEP A

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- No appetite
- Jaundice (yellowing of eyes & skin)
- Stomach
- Vomiting
- Dark pee, pale poop, and diarrhea

Some people with hep A don’t have any symptoms and people with hepatitis A can spread the virus to others up to 2 weeks before symptoms begin.

WHEN TO GET MEDICAL HELP

If you think you might have hepatitis A, see your doctor.

More information on hepatitis A and where to get vaccinations: www.kingcounty.gov/hepA/alert