HEALTH WARNING FOR PEOPLE LIVING HOMELESS

WHAT IS HEPATITIS A?
Hepatitis A (Hep A) is a virus that spreads easily. Many people don’t know that they have Hep A so they spread it without knowing.
It can cause severe liver disease that can last for months.
Sometimes people die from Hep A.
Hep A has been spreading in people living homeless in the U.S.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?
Hep A is in the poop of someone with Hep A. If they haven’t washed their hands after using the toilet, tiny bits of poop can get on things they touch. Hep A spreads from:

- Touching objects or eating food that someone with Hep A handled
- Having sex with someone who has Hep A
- Sharing needles, pipes, or other items to take drugs

HOW CAN YOU PREVENT HEP A?
- Wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet, and before you cook or eat! Soap and water work best, but if they aren’t available, use alcohol-based hand gel.
- Don’t share food, drinks, needles, or smokes with other people.
- Use your own towels, toothbrush and utensils.
- Don’t have sex with someone who has Hep A.
- Get 2 shots of Hep A vaccine.
SYMPTOMS OF HEP A

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

Some people with Hep A don’t have any symptoms.

WHEN TO GET MEDICAL HELP

If you think you might have Hep A, see your doctor or go to the Emergency Room.

Get Hep A shots from your doctor or clinic to prevent getting Hep A. Most pharmacies offer the Hep A shots if you have an insurance card.

More information from Healthcare for the Homeless Network: www.kingcounty.gov/hch

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