

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is very rare in the UK. Most people will make a full recovery. But it can be more serious for people with a long term liver condition.

Hepatitis A is caused by a virus. It is spread through contaminated water, food and sometimes by close contact with someone with the virus. Most UK cases were picked up in high risk areas overseas where it is hard to get clean water.

Preventing Hepatitis A

The best way to prevent hepatitis A is with a vaccine. This is available for free if you are at higher risk. For example if you have a long term liver condition, you are travelling to somewhere with a high risk, or someone close to you has hepatitis A.

You can reduce your risk by using condoms and not sharing needles.

If you are travelling to somewhere high risk:

- Always wash your hands well before eating or preparing food
- Only drink bottled water
- Do not eat raw fruit and vegetables
- Do not eat shellfish

Stopping the spread

Hepatitis A can be passed on for 7 days after you start to have symptoms. So during this time:

- Do not go to work or school
- Limit your contact with other people
- Wash your hands really well after going to the toilet
- Do not prepare food for other people
- Use a condom or dam if you have sex
- Do not share needles with anyone else

Symptoms of hepatitis A

Some people will have no symptoms of hepatitis A. For others they can range from mild to very severe.

Symptoms start about 4 weeks after you pick up the virus. They include:

- Jaundice (a yellow colour to the eyes and skin)
- Itchy skin
- Flu-like symptoms
- Feeling very tired
- Feeling or being sick

Diagnosis and treatment of hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is diagnosed with blood tests.

Most people with hepatitis A will get better by themselves in a few months.

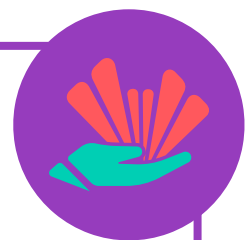
You might want some medicines to help with symptoms, for example itching or feeling sick. Some medicines can be dangerous if you have hepatitis A. **So always talk to your doctor before taking anything.**

If you become very unwell from hepatitis A you might need to be treated in hospital, possibly in an intensive care unit. But this is very rare.

How we can help

The Liver UK support team are here for you and for your family and friends. Find out more more at **liveruk.org/support**

Call our nurse-led helpline to talk to one of our team: **0800 652 7330**



For more information about Hepatitis A and links to support visit **liveruk.org/hepatitis-a** or scan the QR code.

