

# Hepatitis A and Travel



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مركز الأمراض الإنتقالية  
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# Hepatitis A in Travel

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## Introduction

Hepatitis A is a viral infection that is transmitted by contaminated water and food (faeco-oral route), or from person to person contact when personal hygiene is poor (casual contact among people does not spread the virus).

The Hepatitis A infection is found worldwide but it is more common where sanitary conditions are poor.

## The Illness

The incubation period of hepatitis A is 14–28 days.

Symptoms of hepatitis A range from mild to severe, and can include fever, malaise, and loss of appetite, nausea, diarrhea, abdominal pain, dark-colored urine and yellowish discoloration of the eyes and skin (Jaundice).

## Treatment

There is no specific treatment for hepatitis A virus.

## Recommendations for travelers

Prevention is focused on ensuring that food and water are safe. Avoiding food such as shellfish, salads, unwashed fruits and vegetables and raw or undercooked meat products is essential.

Good personal hygiene is also very important. Individuals should ensure they wash their hands prior to eating and after using the bathroom.

## Vaccination

The Hepatitis A vaccine is available separately or in combination with the Hepatitis B vaccine or with a Typhoid vaccine for people who are at increased risk of infection or for those wishing to obtain immunity.

The vaccination should be considered under the following circumstances and is dependent on the individual risk assessment:

- Non-immune travelers to developing countries are most at risk of infection.
- Travelers travelling to areas where they will be exposed to unsafe drinking water or where sanitation conditions are poor.
- Travelers visiting friends and family
- Long stay travelers

The Hepatitis A vaccine is available at the Communicable Disease Center Travel Clinic for both adults and children.