



Lexington-Fayette County Health Department

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May 30, 2018

Dear Healthcare Provider:

Since last fall, Kentucky has been experiencing an outbreak of hepatitis A cases. Over 600 cases have been reported to public health authorities so far, compared to around 20 cases that are typically recognized each year in Kentucky. Though the outbreak was initially centered in the Louisville area, outbreak-related cases have now been reported in 41 counties across the state, including Fayette. Unlike traditional hepatitis A outbreaks that have usually involved a single contaminated food source, this one is largely spreading person-to-person. People who use illicit drugs, who are homeless or who are incarcerated are at especially high risk.

Vaccination is the best method of prevention. Because of the sharp rise in cases in some areas, the Kentucky Department for Public Health is recommending that all residents of 10 Kentucky counties be vaccinated. Although Fayette is not yet one of those counties, **the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department is urging providers to give hepatitis A vaccine to all interested adult patients, regardless of whether they fall into a high-risk category. In addition, all children should be vaccinated for hepatitis A per a new requirement for school entry, beginning July 1, 2018.**

Hepatitis A vaccine, or combination vaccines that contain it, such as *Twinrix*[®], are readily available and covered by most health insurers, including Medicaid. If you are experiencing difficulty obtaining vaccine or you'd like more information about hepatitis A and the current outbreak, call us at 859-288-2437 or visit our website:

www.lexingtonhealthdepartment.org

Please join us in sharing this message with other providers and your patients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Craig E. Humbaugh". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Kraig E. Humbaugh, MD, MPH
Commissioner of Health
Lexington-Fayette County Health Department