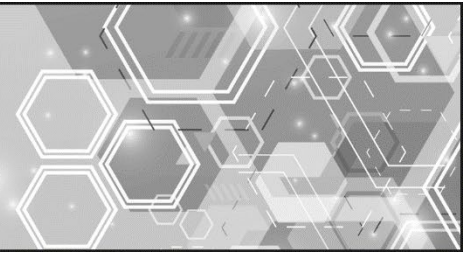




Durham Region Health Department **Facts about...**



Hepatitis A Vaccine

What is it?

Hepatitis A vaccine protects against the hepatitis A virus which can cause damage to your liver. There are two vaccines that protect against hepatitis A; the hepatitis A vaccine and a combined hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccine.

Who should receive the vaccine?

Hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for anyone who is at risk for hepatitis A infection. The following people can get publicly funded (free) hepatitis A vaccine:

- persons with chronic liver disease (including hepatitis B and hepatitis C)
- persons who are intravenous or injection drug users
- men who have sex with men (MSM)

How effective is the vaccine?

Hepatitis A vaccine can provide at least 90-97% protection against the hepatitis A virus in most healthy adults and children who receive a complete series.

Hepatitis A vaccine provides about 80% protection against the hepatitis A virus if given within one week of being exposed.

What is the schedule for the vaccine?

Two doses of the vaccine are needed for lasting protection. These doses should be given 6-36 months apart depending on the product. Hepatitis A vaccine may be given at the same time as other routine vaccine(s), but at a different site using a different needle.

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905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 | durham.ca/health

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.



Are there side effects with the vaccine?

The most common side effects are:

- soreness and redness where the vaccine was given
- headache
- irritability
- malaise
- fever
- fatigue
- gastrointestinal symptoms

Side effects are usually mild and only last a short time. A cold, wet compress applied to the injection site and/or acetaminophen can be used to help relieve pain, swelling and/or mild fever after vaccination.

Severe allergic reactions after vaccination are very rare and may not be related to the vaccine. However, if you think a serious reaction is developing, seek medical attention right away. Any unusual or significant changes in your health or your child's health after the immunization should be reported to a health care provider and the Health Department.

Who should not get the vaccine?

- Anyone who has had a serious allergic reaction (called anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of hepatitis A vaccine.
- People who are sick with a high fever, moderate or severe acute illness worse than a cold should wait until they feel better before getting the vaccine.
- If you have any medical conditions, discuss the vaccine with a healthcare provider to determine if you should receive it.
- Any component in a vaccine may be a potential allergen. The most common for hepatitis A are:
 - Neomycin
 - Latex (Vaqta® only)
- Pregnant or breastfeeding women should discuss the need for hepatitis A vaccine with their health care provider before vaccination.

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