

Morgan County Schools

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Parents and Staff of Morgan County Schools:

Due to the current statewide outbreak of Hepatitis A in West Virginia and surrounding areas, a State Health Alert has been issued. The cases of Hepatitis A that have been reported are highly mobile and have been linked to the national outbreak. Hepatitis A or HAV, is contagious and may spread if exposure occurs.

Parents are encouraged to review their children's vaccination status. HAV vaccine is recommended for all children 12 months of age and older. The vaccine is given as two doses, at least six months apart. Two doses are needed for long-term protection. Please contact the Morgan County Health Department or your Primary Care Provider to verify or to schedule an appointment to be immunized.

Children younger than 6 years usually have few or no signs or symptoms. Symptoms are more common in older children and adults. Symptoms include: fever, jaundice, abdominal discomfort, tiredness, dark-brown urine, loss of appetite, nausea, and occasional diarrhea can occur.

HAV is spread through the fecal-oral route. This generally involves an infected child contaminating his/her own fingers, then touching an object that another child touches. The child who touched the contaminated surface then puts their fingers into his/her own mouth or another person's mouth.

Hand Washing is the number one way to prevent spread of illness. We encourage all faculty and students to use good hand-hygiene practices. Teach children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before any activity that potentially involves food or putting anything in the mouth. Routine cleaning and disinfection of surfaces is also recommended, as HAV can survive on surfaces for weeks. Alcohol based hand sanitizers are not effective in killing the virus.

Children and adults, especially food handlers, with HAV should be excluded for 1 week after onset of illness. Please keep your child home and notify the school nurse if he or she displays signs and symptoms of the illness or are diagnosed by their doctor.

For more information on the current HAV outbreak visit:
https://dhhr.wv.gov/oeps/disease/viral-hepatitis/pages/hepA_outbreak.aspx.

Stay Healthy,

Morgan County School Nurses