

飲食業從業員 Hepatitis A and Food Handler



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什麼是甲型肝炎？
甲型肝炎是由甲型肝炎病毒引起的傳染病，主要經由腸道傳染，病毒由病人的大便中排出體外，再經由受病毒污染的食物而傳播；其傳播途徑包括：

- 進食未經煮熟及沾染了病毒的食物，特別是蠔、蜆、貽貝和扇貝等雙殼類水產；
- 飲用受病毒污染的水或飲品；
- 與受感染人士有親密的接觸。

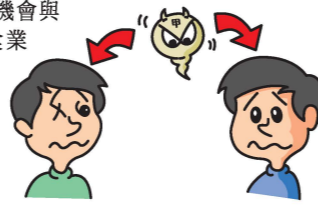
兒童如患上甲型肝炎，病況一般都很輕微。不過，成人的病況則會較嚴重。甲型肝炎的病徵包括：輕微發熱、全身疲倦、肌肉痛、頭痛、食慾不振、嘔心嘔吐、腹瀉、上腹不適、黃疸（皮膚及眼白發黃）及茶尿等等。

絕大部分受甲型肝炎感染的人士都會完全康復，而經自然感染的人痊癒後所產生的免疫能力都能終生持續有效，但亦有極少數的甲型肝炎病例會發展成肝臟衰竭，甚至死亡。



甲型肝炎在香港流行嗎？
香港現在屬甲型肝炎中度流行的地方。最近一次甲型肝炎流行症發生在1992年，呈報個案多達三千多宗，其中四人病重死亡。在香港大部分三十歲以下的青年都從未受感染，因此，這些人對甲型肝炎病毒就沒有抵抗力。

飲食業從業員會較易染上甲型肝炎嗎？
飲食業從業員感染甲型肝炎的機會與一般市民沒有分別。不過飲食業從業員因工作關係，時常會接觸到受病毒污染的食品；一旦他們染上甲型肝炎，便有機會把病毒傳染給很多人。



飲食業從業員應怎樣預防甲型肝炎？
其實，只要在處理食物的各階段都注重衛生，任何人都可以有效地預防甲型肝炎及各種各樣的腸道傳染病。具體的做法可從以下三方面著手：

- **個人衛生**
 - 保持雙手清潔，預備食物前、進食前、如廁之後都應使用肥皂及清水洗手。
 - 當感到發燒、嘔吐、腹瀉等身體不適時，應停止工作並立即就醫。



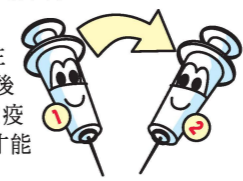
- **食物衛生**
 - **選購** - 購買食材時應選擇貨物來源可靠及信譽良好的供應商；尤其應注意活魚及貝殼類海產，確保新鮮和無異味。
 - **處理及貯存** - 所有食物都應清洗乾淨後才烹煮，生和熟的食物應以不同的食具來處理；生的肉食、海產和其他容易變壞的食物，如非立即食用，應放進雪櫃內貯存。
 - **烹調** - 甲型肝炎病毒要在攝氏85度煮一分鐘才會死亡；因此食物必須徹底煮熟才可食用，翻煮食物時更須認真煮透。
- **環境衛生**
 - 任何時候都應保持環境衛生，尤其應注意廚房和廁所的清潔。



什麼是甲型肝炎疫苗？
甲型肝炎疫苗的主要成份是已失去活性的甲型肝炎病毒，疫苗經注射進入人體後會刺激抗體的產生而形成對甲型肝炎病毒的免疫力。由於大部分三十歲以上的本地人士有可能已接觸過甲型肝炎，並對病毒產生免疫能力；為避免不必要的注射，有意接受甲型肝炎預防疫苗的人士，應該在開始疫苗注射之前檢驗血液，若測試顯示未有甲型肝炎抗體，才需要接受疫苗注射。

甲型肝炎疫苗注射計劃共包括兩次注射，第二次疫苗注射通常在第一次注射後的六至十八個月內進行；在接受第一次疫苗注射之後，人體通常需要一個月時間才能產生足以抵禦甲型肝炎病毒的抗體。

目前，尚未有甲型肝炎疫苗適用於一歲以下兒童。



甲型肝炎疫苗會引起不良反應嗎？
正如其他藥物一樣，甲型肝炎疫苗亦有機會引致不良反應；但在接受注射後短時間內發生嚴重過敏反應的情況十分罕見。一般情況下，接受甲型肝炎疫苗注射後可能有一兩天輕微不適，最常見的副作用是注射位置疼痛；其他反應還包括頭痛、食慾不振及疲倦。

什麼人不宜接受甲型肝炎疫苗？

- 凡對疫苗有過敏反應、及曾經在接受甲型肝炎疫苗後有過敏反應者不適宜接受注射；
- 如患重病或注射當日身體不適者，應於康復後才接受注射；
- 雖然沒有證據顯示甲型肝炎疫苗危害孕婦或胎兒的健康，但甲型肝炎疫苗應用於孕婦之安全性尚未能確定，因此從事飲食業的孕婦應與醫生研究是否適宜接受注射。



可以在哪裡接受甲型肝炎疫苗注射？
有意接受甲型肝炎疫苗注射者，可直接向家庭醫生或任何註冊西醫查詢檢查及注射的安排。



若懷疑飲食業從業員感染了甲型肝炎應該怎辦？
假如一個人受到甲型肝炎感染，在病徵出現之前一至兩星期，及至病徵出現之後的一星期或更長時間，都可將病毒傳染給其他人。為避免廣泛地傳播給顧客和公眾，從事飲食業人士若出現甲型肝炎感染的病徵，便應該嚴格遵守個人衛生並立即求醫。



知多一點點

- **多認識 病毒性肝炎**
 - 肝炎熱線：2112 9911
 - 病毒性肝炎預防服務網站：<http://www.hepatitis.gov.hk>
- **多認識 食物衛生**
 - 食物安全中心熱線：2868 0000
 - 食物安全中心網站：<http://www.cfs.gov.hk>

What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus. In general, it is transmitted through fecal-oral route. Food contaminated with the virus is the most common vehicle transmitting hepatitis. The hepatitis A virus can be transmitted by -

- eating contaminated food without proper cooking (especially bivalve shellfish such as oysters, clams, mussels, and scallops, etc.)
- drinking contaminated water
- close personal contact with infected person



The disease is mild in children, but can be more severe in adults. Adults who get hepatitis A usually may result in a series of symptoms such as:

- mild fever
- tiredness
- muscle pain
- headache
- loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, upper abdominal pain
- jaundice (yellow discoloration of skin and eyes) and tea-coloured urine

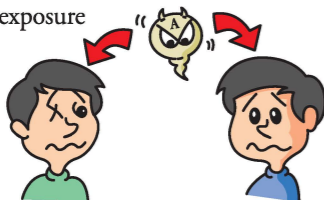
Hepatitis A would rarely cause liver failure and death. Persons recovered from the infection develop lifelong immunity against the infection.

Is hepatitis A common in Hong Kong?

Hong Kong is a region with intermediate prevalence of hepatitis A. The recent outbreak in 1992 resulted in more than 3000 cases and 4 deaths. Most people in Hong Kong below the age of 30 have never been exposed to hepatitis A, and are therefore susceptible to the virus.

Are food handlers at higher risk for hepatitis A?

Food handlers are not at higher risk than other persons for becoming infected with hepatitis A. However, food handlers can get infected with constant exposure to some contaminated food. Once they are infected, they have the potential to infect hundreds of people.



How can food handlers prevent the spread of hepatitis A?

The key is to observe good hygiene practices at all stages of food preparation. Food handlers should pay attention to the followings:

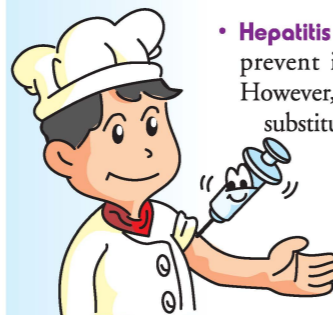
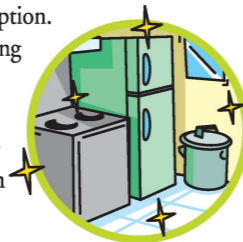
• Personal hygiene

- Keep hands clean. Wash hands with soap and water before handling food, before meals or after using the toilet.
- Don't handle food in case of fever, vomiting or diarrhoea. Seek medical advice immediately.



• Food hygiene

- **Purchase** - Use raw materials from reliable sources for food production. Buy live fish and shellfish which are fresh and free from abnormal odour.
- **Handling and storage of food** - All food should be washed thoroughly before cooking. Raw and cooked food should be handled with separate utensils. Raw meat, fresh seafood and other perishable food items should be kept in the refrigerator, if they are not consumed immediately.
- **Cooking of food** - Ensure thorough cooking of food and reheating of leftovers before consumption. The hepatitis A virus is killed by heating to 85°C for 1 minute.
- **Environmental hygiene** - Always keep the environment clean. Particular attention should be paid to the kitchen and toilet.

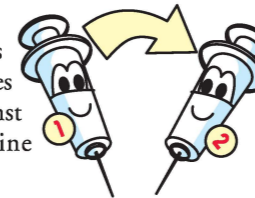


- **Hepatitis A vaccine** can be used to prevent infection in food handlers. However, hepatitis A vaccine does not substitute personal and food hygiene.

What is hepatitis A vaccine?

The hepatitis A vaccine is essentially an inactivated form of the virus. Being vaccinated against hepatitis A helps produce antibodies to the virus. As adults who are over 30 years old may already developed immunity against hepatitis A, hepatitis A serostatus should be checked before vaccination so as to avoid unnecessary injections.

A complete course of vaccination requires 2 injections, given 6 months to 18 months apart. The body takes 4 weeks to develop antibody against hepatitis A after the first vaccine injection.



Hepatitis A vaccine is not licensed for children younger than one year of age.

What are the adverse effects of the vaccine?

Like any medicine, hepatitis A vaccine could possibly cause adverse reactions. These reactions are usually mild and often last for only one to two days. The most commonly seen undesirable effect is injection site soreness. Other reactions include headache, loss of appetite and tiredness. Severe allergic reaction that occurs within a few minutes to a few hours of the shot is very rare.

Who should not get the vaccine?

- Anyone who has ever had a severe life-threatening allergic reaction to the previous dose of hepatitis A vaccine or allergy to any vaccine component should not get another dose.
- Anyone who is moderately or severely ill should postpone the shot.
- The safety of hepatitis A vaccine for pregnant women has not been determined. Although there is no evidence that it is harmful to either pregnant women or their unborn babies. If the food handler is pregnant, it is preferable to inform the doctor.



Where can food handlers get the vaccine?

For arrangement of hepatitis A vaccination, please consult your family doctor.



What should be done if a food handler is experiencing symptoms of hepatitis A?

An infected person can spread the hepatitis A virus for one to two weeks before symptoms start; and up to one week or longer after symptoms develop. Therefore, any food handler experiencing symptoms of hepatitis A should observe high standard of personal hygiene, and seek medical care immediately.



To know more about viral hepatitis and food hygiene

24-hour hotline

- Hepatitis Hotline Tel: 2112 9911
- Centre for Food Safety Tel: 2868 0000

Website

- Viral Hepatitis Preventive Service
<http://www.hepatitis.gov.hk>
- Centre for Food Safety
<http://www.cfs.gov.hk>