



PHARMACIST

POCKET GUIDE:

HEPATITIS A VACCINE

Who should get vaccinated?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the hepatitis A vaccine to unvaccinated adults who are at risk for hepatitis A virus infection, including^{1,2}:

- International travelers
- People with chronic liver disease
- People who use illegal drugs
- Men who have sex with men

Please refer to the CDC's Pink Book and the ACIP Schedule for the complete hepatitis A vaccination recommendation.^{1,2}

Who should not get vaccinated?

Do not give the hepatitis A vaccine if your patient¹:

- Has ever had a severe allergic reaction after a dose of hepatitis A vaccine, or has a severe allergy to any part of the vaccine
- Has a moderate or severe acute illness. Vaccination should be deferred until the person's condition has improved

International travel and hepatitis A

- In the United States, one of the most frequently identified risk factors for contracting hepatitis A is international travel³
- According to the CDC, the risk of exposure to hepatitis A for travelers depends primarily on the destination³

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International travel and hepatitis A (cont'd)

- All persons traveling to countries that have high or intermediate rates of hepatitis A should be vaccinated before traveling³
- The risk for hepatitis A exists even for travelers to urban areas, those who stay in luxury hotels, and those who report that they are careful about what they drink and eat⁴
- Some travel experts advise people traveling outside the United States to consider vaccination against hepatitis A regardless of their destination³

Chronic liver disease and hepatitis A

- Patients with chronic liver disease are not at increased risk for hepatitis A virus infection; however, they are at increased risk for complications should they become infected¹
- Complications among patients with chronic liver disease include fulminant hepatitis A (rapid onset of liver failure), which is often fatal¹
- The CDC recommends that all patients with chronic liver disease receive hepatitis A vaccination^{1,2}

References: **1.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases*. Hamborsky J, Kroger A, Wolfe S, eds. 13th ed. Washington D.C. Public Health Foundation; 2015:135-148. **2.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Recommended Immunization Schedule for Adults Aged 19 Years or Older, United States, 2017. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/adult/adult-combined-schedule.pdf>. Updated February 6, 2017. Accessed August 3, 2017. **3.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC Health Information for International Travel 2016. New York: Oxford University Press; 2016:Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B. **4.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hepatitis A Questions and Answers for Health Professionals. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/havfaq.htm>. Updated July 13, 2016. Accessed August 7, 2017.



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