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\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{1,2}

Who should not get vaccinated?

Do not give the hepatitis A vaccine if your patient\textsuperscript{1}:

- 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 travel\textsuperscript{3}
- According to the CDC, the risk of exposure to hepatitis A for travelers depends primarily on the destination\textsuperscript{3}
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 traveling\(^3\)

- 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 eat\(^4\)

- Some travel experts advise people traveling outside the United States to consider vaccination against hepatitis A regardless of their destination\(^3\)

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 infected\(^1\)

- Complications among patients with chronic liver disease include fulminant hepatitis A (rapid onset of liver failure), which is often fatal\(^1\)

- The CDC recommends that all patients with chronic liver disease receive hepatitis A vaccination\(^1,2\)

References: