



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

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HEALTH ADVISORY: Hepatitis A Virus November 4, 2016

The International Company for Agricultural Production and Processing (ICAPP) in Egypt has recalled all frozen strawberries and frozen strawberry products that it has imported into the U.S. since January 1, 2016, as a result of a current hepatitis A outbreak investigation by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and state health departments.

Because of the widespread distribution of these products prior to the recall, please consider hepatitis A as a diagnosis for any patients presenting with symptoms of acute hepatitis. Serological testing is required to confirm the diagnosis of hepatitis A. The confirmatory test for hepatitis A is IgM anti-HAV.

Hepatitis A is a viral infection of the liver. The virus is ingested by mouth from fecal-contaminated food or drink, or through close personal contact with an infected person. Those with the hepatitis A virus are most infectious 2 weeks prior to symptom onset. The incubation period for hepatitis A is approximately 28 days (range 15-50 days). Symptoms include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal discomfort, dark urine, clay-colored bowel movements, joint pain, and jaundice. Symptoms can last for several weeks and typically do not last more than 2 months. Children under 6 years of age with hepatitis A are often asymptomatic.

All patients should be kept current with hepatitis A vaccination. Check the vaccination history of all patients and offer vaccine to anyone that is not up to date with the vaccine schedule. Two doses of hepatitis A vaccine given 6 months apart remains an effective way to prevent disease and outbreaks. Hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for:

- All children at age 1 year
- Food service workers or other food handlers
- International travelers, including on cruise ships
- Men who have sex with men
- Drug users, injection and non-injection
- Persons with clotting-factor disorders
- Persons that work with non-human primates or with hepatitis A in a research laboratory
- Persons with chronic liver disease, including HBV- and HCV-infected persons with chronic liver disease
- Family and care givers of recent adoptees from countries where hepatitis A is common
- Anyone else seeking long-term protection

Detailed guidelines for hepatitis A vaccination are available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/hepa/default.htm#vacc>

In Texas, confirmed or suspected acute hepatitis A cases are required to be reported within 1 work day. Hepatitis A reports should be made to your local health department or by calling 800-705-8868.

More information about the recall can be found at: <http://www.fda.gov/food/RecallsOutbreaksEmergencies/Outbreaks/ucm518775.htm> and <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/outbreaks/2016/hav-strawberries.htm>