

Hepatitis A

INFORMATION AND ADVICE

Since fall 2021, an increasing number of cases of hepatitis A have been identified in some Nunavik communities. In order to avoid the spreading of this disease, it is recommended that people who aren't adequately protected receive the vaccine against hepatitis A.

Who should get vaccinated?

In the past, several vaccination campaigns against hepatitis A have occurred in Nunavik (e.g. years 1997 and 2002). Since 2018, the hepatitis A vaccine is given to children in grade 4 and, more recently, to children of 18 months of age.

For that reasons, many Nunavimmiut are today considered protected against this disease. However, there are reasons to believe that some **children under 9 years old** and some adults (particularly those **who were born between 1970 and 1981**) are not. These people should receive the vaccine as soon as possible.

What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is an infection caused by a virus that attacks the liver.

What are the signs and symptoms of hepatitis A?

Most preschoolers have few or no symptoms.

Among older children and adults, the following symptoms may appear:

- **Fever**
- **Abdominal discomfort**
- **General discomfort**
- **Jaundice**
- **Loss of appetite**
- **Dark urine (colour of Coca-Cola)**
- **Nausea and vomiting**
- **Pale stools**

How does the disease spread?

The virus is present in the stools of the infected individual. It can spread through:

- Consumption of contaminated water or food and drink;
- Contact with contaminated objects (e.g., toys).

