



For Immediate Release:

December 1, 2010

Employee at Westwood Jerry's Deli Diagnosed with Hepatitis A Public Health taking steps to reduce the risk of the illness spreading

LOS ANGELES – Today the Department of Public Health announced that an employee of Jerry's Deli in Westwood, located at 10925 Weyburn Ave., has been diagnosed with acute hepatitis A. The hepatitis A virus is spread by close physical contact and through fecal contamination of food or drink, so Public Health recommends that patrons who ate sandwiches at the restaurant or who ate catered sandwiches from this location on **November 18, 21, 23 or 24** should receive an immune globulin (IG) shot or a hepatitis A vaccination no later than 14 days after their exposure to prevent or reduce illness.

“So far, we have not received notice of any cases resulting from exposure at this establishment, and the risk of transmission from this patient is considered low,” said Jonathan E. Fielding, MD, MPH, Director of Public Health and Health Officer. “We are actively investigating the situation and working with the management of Jerry's Deli to prevent any possible spread of the disease.”

Health officials recommend that patrons who ate hot or cold sandwiches at the Westwood location of Jerry's Deli or who ate catered sandwiches from this location on the dates specified above receive an IG shot or hepatitis A vaccination to prevent or reduce illness. No other food or drink is considered to be at risk. IG is a shot of concentrated antibodies made from donated blood, providing temporary protection; while the hepatitis A vaccine helps your body develop its own antibodies, providing longer-lasting protection.

Shots must be received within 14 days of exposure in order to reduce or prevent illness. Only those patrons ate sandwiches at the restaurant or who ate catered sandwiches from this location on November 18, 21, 23 or 24 need to take steps to protect their health.

Please note that only the Westwood branch of Jerry's Deli is affected by this Health Alert.

Persons who have been vaccinated against hepatitis A or have received IG within the last three months or have ever had laboratory confirmed infection with the hepatitis A virus also do not need an injection of IG.

Affected residents are encouraged to seek IG or vaccine through their personal physicians. The Department of Public Health will make IG and vaccine available through certain clinics through December 8. A list of these Public Health clinics, dates and locations can be found on the DPH website at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov or by calling the LA County Info line at 211 from any landline or cell phone within the county.



Persons who had sandwiches from Jerry's Deli in Westwood between November 12 and November 17 may have been exposed to hepatitis A but it is too late to receive IG or vaccine to prevent illness. If you experience any of the symptoms of hepatitis A, please contact your doctor. There is no risk to any person who ate food prepared after November 24.

Signs and symptoms of hepatitis A

Persons who had sandwiches from Jerry's Deli in Westwood between November 12 and November 17, or those who had sandwiches between November 18 and November 24 and did not receive a protective shot, may develop hepatitis A. The incubation period for hepatitis A is two to seven weeks. If you may have been exposed, watch for the following symptoms:

- jaundice (a yellow color to the eyes or skin)
- nausea
- loss of appetite
- vomiting
- fever
- abdominal cramps
- dark-colored urine
- fatigue and light-colored bowel movements

If you experience these symptoms, contact your physician.

Close contacts, including household and sexual partners, are at risk for acquiring hepatitis A from an infected person. It is important to be diagnosed promptly to ensure that treatments with IG or vaccine are effective. Routine vaccination and thorough handwashing with soap and hot water after using the toilet and before handling food are the most effective factors in preventing the spread of the disease.

The Department of Public Health is committed to protecting and improving the health of the nearly 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, Public Health oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health. Public Health comprises more than 4,000 employees and has an annual budget exceeding \$750 million. To learn more about Public Health and the work we do, please visit <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov>, visit our YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/lapublichealth>, or follow us on Twitter: LAPublicHealth.

###