

Hepatitis A outbreak seen in Los Angeles County

19 September 2017

Public health authorities on Tuesday declared an outbreak of the highly contagious liver disease hepatitis A in Los Angeles County, the third California region to see significant infections this year.

Health officials reported the outbreak to the county Board of Supervisors, which requested a briefing due to the proximity of LA to San Diego, which has had more than 420 cases and 16 deaths since early this year.

Vaccinations were urged as the best way to prevent spread of the disease.

Most of the San Diego cases are among homeless people or [illicit drug users](#). Authorities there have declared a health emergency.

In Northern California, Santa Cruz County has confirmed 69 hepatitis A cases since April, compared to the normal one or two a year.

The LA County health department says the hepatitis A virus is transmitted fecal-orally, from person to person or through food or other items. Symptoms include fever, malaise, dark urine, anorexia, nausea, and abdominal discomfort, followed by jaundice.

The incubation period ranges from 15 to 50 days. Sexual and household contacts with an infected person increase the risk of getting the disease.

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