



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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## **HEPATITIS A UPDATE – APRIL 28, 2008**

### **HEPATITIS A OUTBREAK:**

- **Four additional cases** of Hepatitis A linked to possible exposure at a Chipotle restaurant in La Mesa have been reported to the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) Community Epidemiology Branch.
- **Total number of cases related to this outbreak: 18. Age range: 23 – 59. 8 females, 10 males.**
- **All 26 food handlers identified to date by the restaurant have tested negative for active Hepatitis A infection.**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The County recommends that individuals who dined at the restaurant between March 1 and April 22, 2008 - and are symptomatic for Hepatitis A - see their physician to be screened for the illness.
- Good hygiene practices, including washing hands or the use of hand sanitizer after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and before preparing and eating food, are important to prevent the spread of Hepatitis A.

### **WHAT IS HEPATITIS A?**

- Hepatitis A is commonly transmitted when an object contaminated with the stool of someone with Hepatitis A comes in contact with another person's mouth.
- Exposure also can take place when an individual consumes food or water contaminated with the Hepatitis A virus.
- Symptoms include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, abdominal discomfort, dark urine, and jaundice. Hepatitis A does not become chronic; symptoms usually last less than 2 months.
- In 2007, there were 82 cases of Hepatitis A in San Diego County. **To date in 2008, there have been 44 cases of Hepatitis A in San Diego County, including the 18 cases related to this outbreak.**
- This last major Hepatitis A outbreak in San Diego County was in 2000.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

- Individuals with no medical provider, or anyone who would like more information, may call the County Epidemiology Branch at (619) 515-6620.
- Information about Hepatitis A vaccine may be obtained from the HHSA Immunizations Branch at (619) 692-8661. Those with a medical provider should check with their doctor about getting inoculated.
- More information is also available at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

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