

# IDRS Infectious Disease Reporting System

Disease Reporting 24 Hours a Day

Columbus Public Health and Franklin County Public Health

## HEPATITIS E

Hepatitis E is a viral infection of the liver caused by the hepatitis E virus. It is common in parts of the world where sanitation is poor. Most people recover fully from hepatitis E without any complications.

### Symptoms

- Yellow eyes or skin
- Fatigue (feeling tired), muscle aches
- Abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Dark colored urine (pee) and light-colored stools (poop)
- If symptoms occur, they usually appear anywhere from 2 to 6 weeks after exposure to hepatitis E virus.

### Transmission

- Hepatitis E virus is found in the stool of those infected with the virus.
- Person-to-person transmission appears to be uncommon.
- In countries with poor sanitation, people most often become infected from drinking contaminated water.
- In the U.S. and other countries where hepatitis E is not common, people have gotten sick with hepatitis E after eating raw or undercooked pork, venison (deer), wild boar meat, or shellfish.

### Treatment

- Diagnosis of hepatitis E would be more likely in individuals with a history of travel to countries where the virus is more common and after other causes of hepatitis (like hepatitis A, B, and C viruses) have been ruled out.
- Hepatitis E usually resolves on its own without treatment.
- Most people recover with rest, adequate nutrition, fluids, and avoiding alcohol.

### Prevention

- No vaccine is available in the U.S. to protect against hepatitis E.
- One can lower their risk by drinking only purified water when traveling to countries where the virus is common and avoiding raw or undercooked pork, venison, and wild boar meat.

**All information is general in nature and is not intended to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.**



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