



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

April 17, 2008

CONTACT: Leslie Ridgeway (619) 685-2239

INDIVIDUAL AT PRESCHOOL HAS HEPATITIS A

Parents and Staff Are Notified; HHSA Recommends Vaccination for Children

Parents and staff members at an East County preschool have been notified that an individual at the preschool has Hepatitis A. The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) recommends that all parents get their children vaccinated against Hepatitis A and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

“All of the people at risk for contracting Hepatitis A from exposure to this individual have been notified and appropriate actions have been taken,” said Dean Sidelinger, M.D., M.S.Ed., Deputy Public Health Officer. “In this situation, the risk of spread of Hepatitis A is low, but it serves as a reminder of the importance of children receiving Hepatitis A vaccine.”

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. 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.

Symptoms include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, abdominal discomfort, dark urine, and jaundice.

The Hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for all children at age 1, with a second dose six months later. In 2007, there were 82 cases of Hepatitis A in San Diego County.

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. More information is also available at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at www.cdc.gov.

###