

# SAN ANTONIO ISD



Photos taken from said.net, Sep 2012



## PARENT HANDOUT ON HEPATITIS A

**OVERVIEW:** Hepatitis A is a serious liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus. Children with the virus often have no symptoms, but they can pass it on to their parents or caregivers, who can get very sick. The hepatitis A vaccine protects against this disease.

**SIGNS/SYMPTOMS:** Children under 6 years old usually have no symptoms. Older children and adults feel very sick and weak. Symptoms may include the following:

- Fever
- Loss of appetite (not wanting to eat)
- Tiredness
- Stomach pain
- Vomiting
- Dark urine
- Yellow skin and eyes

People feel sick 2 to 6 weeks after they get the hepatitis A virus.

**HOW TRANSMITTED:** Hepatitis A virus is found in the stool (feces) of a person who has the virus. It spreads when a person puts something in his or her mouth that has the hepatitis A virus on it. Even if the item looks clean, it can still have virus on it from stool that can spread to others. It can spread by touching objects such as doorknobs or diapers that have virus on them.

**HOW DIAGNOSED:** Hepatitis A is diagnosed by a medical doctor through the use of blood tests. Signs and symptoms are usually the first indicator of Hepatitis A and are then verified by blood tests.

**PREVENTION MEASURES:** The hepatitis A vaccine prevents hepatitis A disease. Hepatitis A is the most common type of hepatitis among children. Getting your child the hepatitis A vaccine protects him against this serious disease 20 years or longer. It can also protect other people. Because children rarely have symptoms, they often pass hepatitis A on to others without anyone knowing they were infected.

**TREATMENT:** There is no specific treatment for hepatitis A. Some people with hepatitis A get so sick that they need care in the hospital. About 100 people in the U.S. die each year from liver failure caused by hepatitis A.

**COMPLICATIONS:** Upon vaccination, your child may feel sore in the arms for about 2 days.

### BOTTOM LINE:

- ✓ Hepatitis A is transmitted from feces.
- ✓ It is the most common type of hepatitis in children.
- ✓ Almost all children who get two doses of the vaccine will be protected from hepatitis A.
- ✓ The vaccine is very safe and is given in 2 doses; 1 every 6 months.



Information taken from [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov).