

2018 Hepatitis A Update

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has declared a statewide community outbreak of hepatitis A after observing an increase in cases linked to certain risk factors since the beginning of 2018. Outbreaks of hepatitis A are occurring in several states across the U.S., including neighboring states of Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan and West Virginia.

Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable liver disease that usually spreads when a person ingests fecal matter - even in microscopic amounts - from contact with objects, food or drinks contaminated by the stool of an infected person. Hepatitis A can also be spread from close personal contact with an infected person, such as through sex.

People at increased risk for hepatitis A in this outbreak include:

- People with direct contact with individuals infected with the virus
- Men who have sex with men
- People who use street drugs whether they are injected or not
- People who are incarcerated
- People experiencing homelessness
- People who have traveled to other areas of the U.S. currently experiencing outbreaks

Symptoms of hepatitis A include fatigue, low appetite, stomach pain, nausea, clay-colored stools and jaundice. People with hepatitis A can experience mild illness lasting a few weeks to severe illness lasting several months.

As of January 7, 2019, ODH reported 1,370 outbreak cases of Hepatitis A across 66 (75%) counties in Ohio (Table 1).

Table 1: Hepatitis A Statewide Community Outbreak Case Statistics, Ohio, 2018. Data obtained from ODH, last updated 1/7/2019.

Hepatitis A Statewide Community Outbreak, Ohio Case Statistics	
Number of cases	1370
Illness onset range	1/5/2018 - 12/29/2018
Number of hospitalizations	856 (63%)
Age range	2-81 years
Sex	59% male
Number of deaths	4
Number of counties with cases	66 (75%)

Hepatitis A in Clark County

There was a dramatic increase (85.6%) in the number of hepatitis A cases reported to the Clark County Combined Health District (CCCHD) in 2018 (Figure 1). In 2018, there were 36 total cases of hepatitis A reported in Clark County (30 confirmed, 6 suspect) (Table 2). Prior to 2018, the most recent confirmed case of hepatitis A occurred in 2011 (Table 2).

Table 2: Hepatitis A in Clark County, Ohio, 2008-2018. Data queried from Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) Data Extract on 1/10/2019.

Case Classification Status	Year										
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Confirmed	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	30
Suspected	1	1	1	5	0	5	4	1	2	7	6

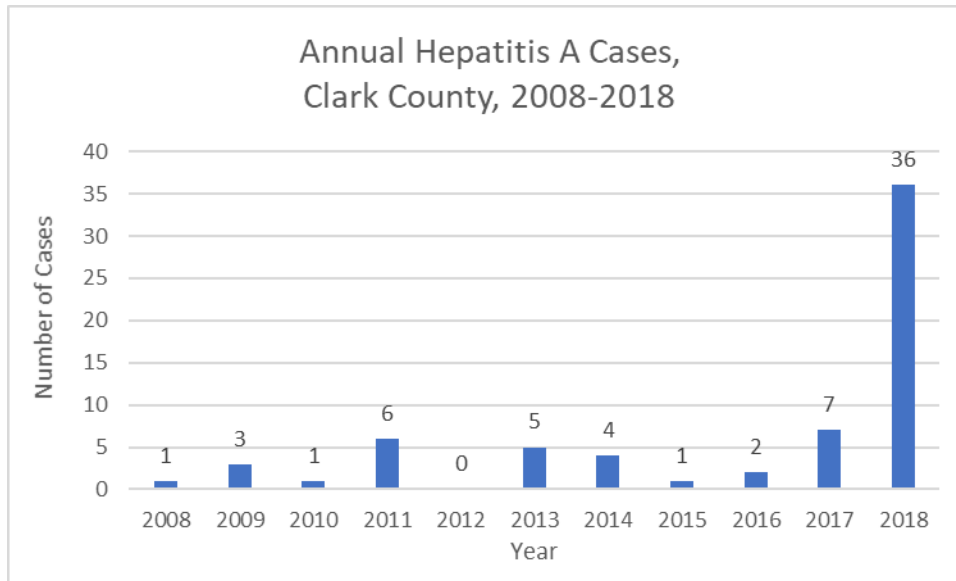


Figure 1: Annual hepatitis A cases in Clark County, 2008-2018. Data queried from Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) Data Extract on 1/10/2019.

Hepatitis A Statewide Community Outbreak Case Statistics for Clark County

Clark County has 17 cases associated with the statewide community outbreak. Of these cases, 70.6% are male, 94.1% are white, and 88.2% are non-Hispanic (Table 3). Ages are distributed evenly, ranging from 23-54 years with an average age of 38.4 and a median age of 37 (Table 3). Approximately 59% of cases are 30-39 years old (Figure 2). The hospitalization rate of outbreak-related hepatitis A cases in Clark County is 47% (Table 3). While this rate is lower than the state hospitalization rate (63%), it is still higher than expected.

The majority of Clark County cases were reported in November and December 2018, but there was an initial peak in May 2018 (Figure 3).

Table 3: Hepatitis A Statewide Community Outbreak Case Statistics, Clark County, 2018. Data queried from Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) Data Extract on 1/10/2019.

Hepatitis A Statewide Community Outbreak, Clark County Case Statistics	
Number of cases	17
Illness onset range	5/13/2018 - 12/19/2018
Number of hospitalizations	8 (47%)
Age range	23-54 years
Average age	38.4
Median age	37
Sex	70.6% Male
Race	94.1% White
Ethnicity	88.2% Non-Hispanic

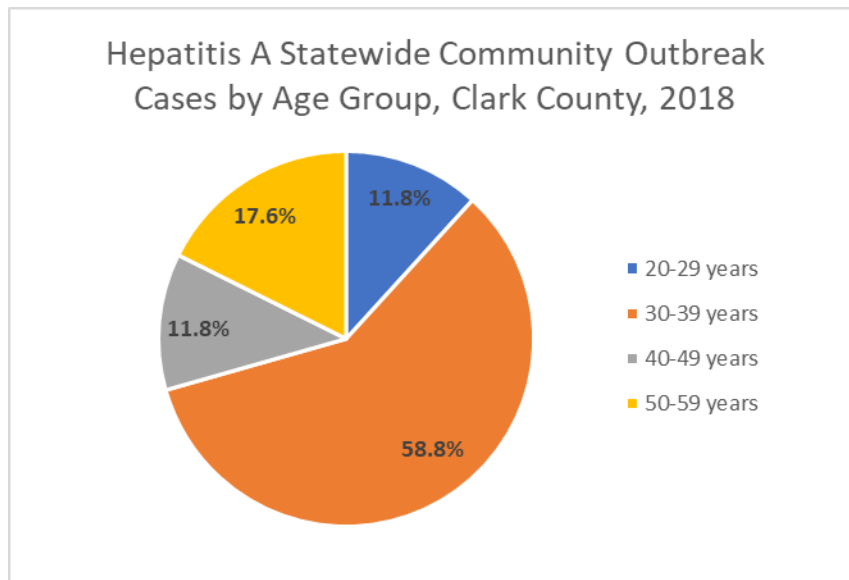


Figure 2: Hepatitis A statewide community outbreak cases by age group, Clark County, 2018. Data queried from Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) Data Extract on 1/10/2019.

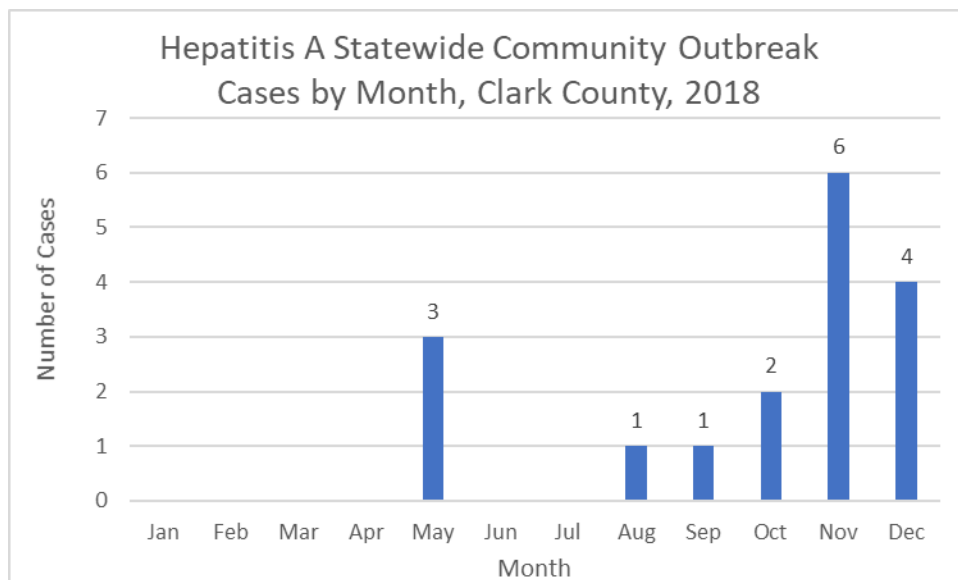


Figure 3: Hepatitis A statewide community outbreak cases by month, Clark County, 2018. Data queried from Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) Data Extract on 1/10/2019.

Community Response

Community response includes:

- Ongoing surveillance
- Case investigation
- Post-exposure prophylaxis for contacts of hepatitis A cases
- Vaccine outreach to high risk populations
- Education and awareness to high risk populations