

Harris County
HCPHES
Public Health & Environmental Services

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For Immediate Release

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North Harris County Restaurant Employee Tests Positive for Hepatitis A

Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services (HCPHES) has been notified that a member of the wait staff of a restaurant located in north Harris County has tested positive for Hepatitis A. The employee is reported to have only worked at the Pappasito's Cantina located at 15280 I-45 North (at Airtex) Houston, TX, 77090 while he was still infectious. Employees and customers who were at this restaurant on the following dates may have been exposed to Hepatitis A: January 23-27, January 30-31, February 1, 3, 7, 8, 9, 2007.

What is Hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a liver disease caused by a virus. Most people recover from Hepatitis A without any major long-term health problems after several weeks. It is passed from person to person when someone does not wash their hands well after going to the bathroom. A person with Hepatitis A is infectious from about two weeks before to one week after the person experiences jaundice (yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes). Infants and children who are infected with Hepatitis A do not always have symptoms, but they are still infectious. People who already have liver problems can become very ill if they get Hepatitis A. If you have ever had hepatitis A you cannot get it again.

I worked or ate at this Pappasito's during one or more of these dates. What should I do?

I worked or ate at Pappasito's on February 7th, 8th, or 9th

HCPHES highly recommends that persons who worked or ate at this Pappasito's Cantina (15280 I-45 North, Houston, TX, 77090) on February 7th, 8th or 9th receive an immune globulin (IG) shot. Immune globulin (IG) contains antibodies to help prevent people from developing disease.

To make sure that people who worked or ate at this restaurant on February 7th, 8th or 9th have access to the appropriate medication, HCPHES will provide free immune globulin (IG) shots on Tuesday, February 20th through Thursday, February 22nd from 8:30a.m. to 8:30p.m. at the Mangum-Howell Center (formerly known as the Doss Community Center) located at 2500 Frick Road, Houston, TX 77038. HCPHES is asking for everyone to bring immunization records for all adults and children who will receive the immunization. (Adults and children who have been fully vaccinated for Hepatitis A are not considered to be at risk for developing this disease.) Although HCPHES is holding the free clinic, people are welcome to go to their private physician or a travel clinic to get an immune globulin (IG) shot at their own expense. Persons receiving immune globulin (IG) should be sure to contact their physician if they develop symptoms of Hepatitis A. (See below.)

I worked or ate at Pappasito's on January 23-27, 30-31 or February 1, 3, 2007

Immune globulin (IG) is only effective if given within a two-week period after exposure to the disease. It will not help employees and customers who were at the restaurant on these dates. However, these persons are still considered to be at risk of developing this illness. Hepatitis A symptoms can appear 15 – 50 days from exposure. So, anyone who ate at this Pappasito's on *January 23-27, 30-31 or February 1, 3, 2007*, should be sure to go to their doctor as soon as possible if they experience the following:

Symptoms of Hepatitis A

- extreme tiredness
- fever
- nausea and/or vomiting
- stomach pain or diarrhea
- light colored stool or dark, rust colored urine
- jaundice (yellowish eyes and skin)

People can protect themselves from getting or infecting others with Hepatitis A by washing their hands thoroughly with soap and water:

- after using the toilet
- after diapering a baby
- before touching (preparing) or eating food

For more information, please call HCPHES at 713-212-0200 Monday, February 19th through Thursday, February 22nd from 8:00a.m. to 8:00p.m. or visit our website at www.hcphes.org.

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