



Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care

Public Health

Environmental Health

300 Carlton Street

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Hepatitis A Health Reminder

Manitoba Health is monitoring an increase in hepatitis A cases in Manitoba. In response, the Health Protection Unit is reminding pool operators of the importance of meeting the requirements set out in the Swimming Pools and Other Water Recreational Facilities Regulation to help reduce the risk of infection in pool water.

What is Hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a contagious viral infection that affects the liver. It is most commonly spread by ingesting contaminated food or water, or through close contact with an infected person.

Why this matters in Pools?

The risk of hepatitis A transmission in a properly operated pool is very low. However, the risk increases when pools are not adequately disinfected or when procedures to prevent contamination of pool water are not followed.

The Swimming Pools and Other Water Recreational Facilities Regulation includes requirements intended to help prevent the spread of illnesses, including hepatitis A, in pool water.

Required Measures for Pool Operators

To help reduce the risk of hepatitis A transmission, pool operators must comply with following:

Water Quality Requirements

- Ensure that free chlorine is maintained between 1 to 5 ppm.
- Ensure pH is maintained between 7.2 and 7.8
- Ensure cyanuric acid does not exceed 50 ppm.

Fecal Incident Response

- If a fecal incident occurs, close the pool immediately and follow the steps outlined in the Health Protection Unit's [Fecal Incident Protocol](#).

Required Signage

- Post clearly visible signage stating that any person with a communicable disease or open sores must not enter the water.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Pool deck, change rooms, showers, and bathrooms must be regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Recommend increasing frequency of routine cleaning to further reduce the risk of transmission.
- For cleaning surfaces contaminated with blood, feces, or vomit, a 5,000 ppm chlorine solution is recommended.

Best Practices

In addition to the above regulatory requirements, operators may adopt the following best practices. These are not regulatory requirements but can further prevent the risk of hepatitis A transmission in your pool.

Showering

- Signage should be available reminding bathers to shower before entering the pool.
- Policies should be adopted to ensure bathers are showering before entering the pool.

Infant Diapering Policies

- It is recommended that facilities adopt the diapering policy found on the Health Protection unit website: [Diapering in Pools](#)

Vaccination and reporting

Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent hepatitis A. If you believe you may have been exposed or are experiencing symptoms, please seek medical advice promptly.

Maintaining strong hygiene and disinfection practices protects the safety of those we serve.

More information about hepatitis A can be found here at Manitoba Health, Public Health Disease webpage: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/diseases/hepatitisa.html>

If you have any questions or need additional guidance, contact the Health Protection Unit at healthprotection@gov.mb.ca