



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Region IV Public Health
Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Wahkiakum counties
and Cowlitz Tribe

Health Advisory

Please deliver a copy of the accompanying alert to each provider in your organization.

Thank you

Questions regarding this alert may be directed to the office of:

Alan Melnick, MD, MPH
Health Officer

Jennifer Vines, MD, MPH
Deputy Health Officer

Clark County Public Health
Cowlitz County Health Department
Skamania County Health Department
Wahkiakum County Department of Health and Human Services

(360) 397-8412

Please Distribute

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for specific incident for situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.



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HEALTH ADVISORY March 31, 2011

TO: Health care providers, health care facilities, veterinarians, clinical laboratories
FROM: Jennifer Vines, MD, MPH, Deputy Health Officer
RE: **Cowlitz County Hepatitis B Outbreak**

The purpose of this advisory is information only. You do not need to take specific action.

The week of March 28, 2011, Cowlitz County Health Department identified a local outbreak of acute hepatitis B. The County has received reports of four individuals with acute hepatitis B in the last 4 weeks (versus three to five total in a typical year).

Age range is 20 – 42. The common risk factor is sharing drug paraphernalia, either needles or straws for snorting cocaine. Of note, three of the four cases had documentation of complete hepatitis B vaccine series.

For individuals with symptoms suggestive of hepatitis B, please arrange for liver function tests, hep B panel and hep D testing (coinfection rates up to 50% in urban IVDU). Report all positive Hepatitis results to the local health jurisdiction of the individual's county of residence.

Please also verify complete hepatitis B vaccination on individuals you encounter, with special attention to those at higher risk due to illicit drug use.

Thank you for your help and collaboration.

Jennifer Vines, MD, MPH
Deputy Health Officer
Cowlitz County Health & Human Services