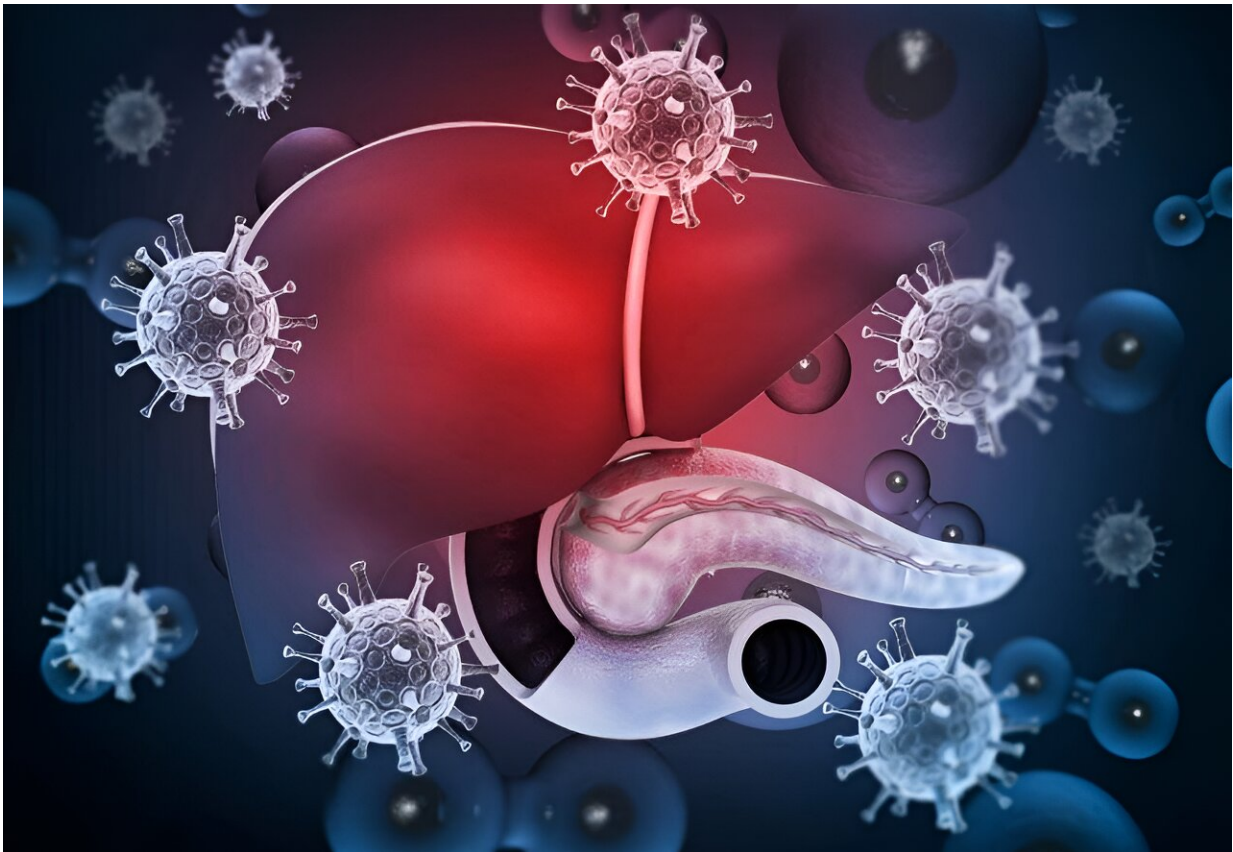


Increase in hepatitis A vaccination needed to prevent deaths

October 26 2023, by Elana Gotkine



Nearly two-thirds of those with hepatitis A virus (HAV)-related deaths have at least one documented indication for HAV vaccine, and only 4% have evidence of vaccination, according to research published in the Oct.

20 issue of *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Megan G. Hofmeister, M.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues analyzed data from 27 HAV outbreak-affected states that contributed data during Aug. 1, 2016, to Oct. 31, 2022, to characterize demographic, risk factor, clinical, and cause-of-death data among 315 outbreak-related HAV deaths.

The researchers found that on 60% of available death certificates, HAV was documented as an underlying or contributing cause of death. There was a peak in outbreak-related deaths in 2019, which then decreased annually through 2022. The median age at death was 55 years; 73 and 84% of deaths occurred among males and non-Hispanic whites, respectively.

Overall, 63% of decedents had at least one documented indication for HAV vaccination, including drug use, homelessness, or coinfection with hepatitis B or hepatitis C (41, 16, 12, and 31%, respectively); evidence of previous HAV vaccination was seen for 4%.

"As of October 2023, 34 states have declared ends to their outbreaks; however, many susceptible adults, particularly among persons who use drugs, persons experiencing homelessness, and persons with [chronic liver disease](#), remain at increased risk for HAV infection or [severe disease](#) from HAV infection," the authors write.

More information: Megan G. Hofmeister et al, Preventable Deaths During Widespread Community Hepatitis A Outbreaks—United States, 2016–2022, *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (2023). [DOI: 10.15585/mmwr.mm7242a1](https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7242a1)

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