Louisiana Declares Hepatitis A Outbreak

This is the 15th state to declare one this year.

December 27, 2018 By Casey Halter

The Louisiana Office of Public Health is investigating an outbreak of hepatitis A virus (HAV) after nearly 25 people contracted the virus near the state capital of Baton Rouge. This is the 15th state to declare an ongoing outbreak in the past year, ABC News reports.

Although the number of cases is relatively low compared with those of other states that have reported outbreaks—Kentucky has identified 3,122 cases; Tennessee has counted 561—health officials say they are mobilizing early, hoping to stop the spread of the virus.

As in other locations, populations at high risk of contracting the virus appear to be people who use drugs, people who are homeless and men who have sex with men. Because HAV is primarily transmitted through the fecal-oral route, it can be easily passed via food, water, close contact with someone with the virus and/or unsanitary conditions, which makes it particularly dangerous when paired with the nations' ongoing opioid and homelessness crises.

For this reason, infectious disease experts say it's essential that public health workers work closely with affected communities to provide hepatitis A vaccines.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/article/louisiana-declares-hepatitis-outbreak