

## Hepatitis A

Agent: Hepatitis A virus (HAV), a member of the Picornavirus family

Mode of Transmission: HAV is spread when fecal matter enters the mouth, such as by consuming contaminated food or water. Most infections result from close contact with an infected household member or sex partner.

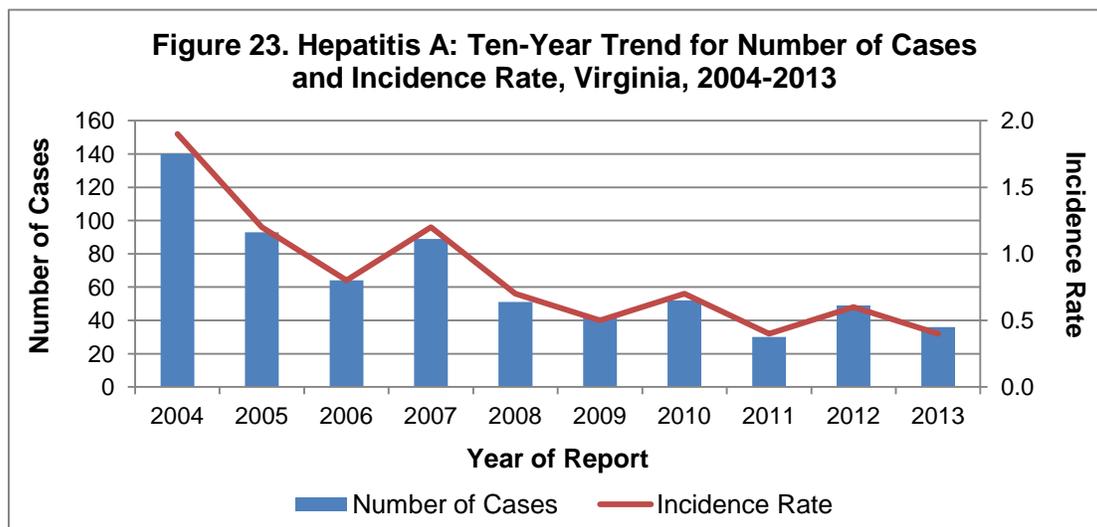
Signs/Symptoms: Fever, malaise, nausea, abdominal discomfort, dark urine, joint pain, and jaundice. In older children and adults, symptoms usually occur for several weeks, though prolonged or relapsing liver disease can last up to six months. Younger children often exhibit no symptoms.

Prevention: Preventive measures include immunization, safe food preparation, and good personal hygiene (e.g., washing hands with soap after using the bathroom, after changing diapers, and before preparing and eating food). Administration of immune globulin (IG) after exposure to hepatitis A can protect against symptomatic infection.

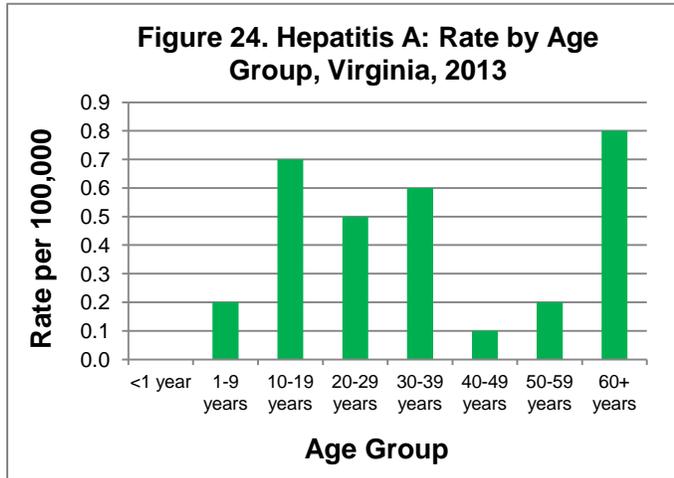
Other Important Information: This is an acute illness only; chronic infection does not occur. A vaccine was first introduced in 1995 and is currently recommended for all children at the age of one year, persons who are at increased risk of infection (i.e., international travelers), and persons who are at increased risk for developing complications from hepatitis A.

<b>Hepatitis A: 2013 Data Summary</b>	
Number of Cases:	36
5-Year Average Number of Cases:	44.8
% Change from 5-Year Average:	-20%
Incidence Rate per 100,000:	0.4

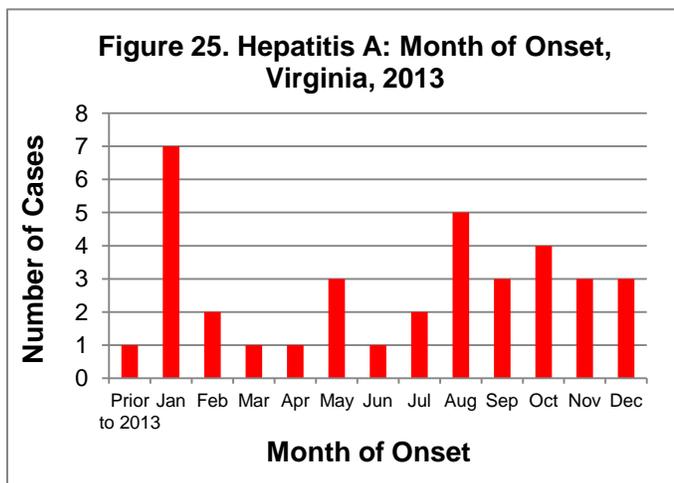
In 2013, 36 cases of hepatitis A were reported in Virginia. This represents a 27% decrease from the 49 cases reported in 2012, and is 20% lower than the five-year average of 44.8 cases per year (Figure 23).



Reported cases ranged in age from three to 93 years. The highest incidence rate occurred in the 60 year and older age group (0.8 per 100,000) and no cases occurred among infants. Rates among the other age groups ranged from 0.1 to 0.7 per 100,000 (Figure 24). Race data were available for 61% of cases. Among those cases with race information available, the rate in the “other” race group was slightly higher (0.5 per 100,000) than the rates in the white and black race groups (0.3 and 0.2 per 100,000, respectively). The rate in females (0.5 per 100,000) was comparable to the rate in males (0.4 per 100,000).



By region, incidence was highest in the central region (0.7 per 100,000) and lowest in the eastern region (0.1 per 100,000). Incidence by locality can be seen in the map below. Cases occurred throughout the year with January being the most frequently reported month of onset (Figure 25). Risk factors were identified in 36% of cases, all of whom had traveled outside of the country. One individual also had known exposure to a confirmed hepatitis A case.



### Hepatitis A Incidence Rate by Locality Virginia, 2013

