



Community Medicine Newsletter

HEPATITIS A ALERT

Dear Physician,

You may be aware that certain lots of Western Family Pomeberry Blend frozen berries have been recalled because they may contain Hepatitis A virus. This afternoon, the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) is informing the public that if they have consumed this product in the previous 14 days, they are eligible for free Hepatitis A vaccine. **The risk to the public is thought to be very low.**

The product has been distributed to Save-On-Foods, Price Smart and affiliated Overwaitea stores. The recall and product image is available at:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/corpaffr/recarapp/2012/20120405de.shtml>

The public are being directed to their local public health units for vaccination, but many may call your offices for advice and vaccination.

Hepatitis A vaccine can be used for post-exposure prophylaxis for up to 14 days after potential exposure to Hepatitis A virus. If the last exposure to the implicated product was more than 14 days previously, vaccination is no longer effective in preventing illness. Those who have had two doses of Hepatitis A vaccine or who have had Hepatitis A disease are immune and do not need further doses of vaccine. Hepatitis A vaccine is safe and recommended for exposed pregnant women. Children under 6 months of age and immunocompromised individuals should receive Hepatitis A immune globulin, not vaccine, for post-exposure prophylaxis, which can be arranged through our office.

If patients present requesting Hepatitis A vaccine for this indication and you have publicly funded Hepatitis A vaccine in your office, please provide the vaccine. If you do not have vaccine in your office, please direct the patients to call us at **604.983.6700** and we will arrange vaccination through a public health unit.

If patients present to your offices with symptoms of Hepatitis A, please call our office at **604.675.3900**, and we will initiate public health follow-up.

If you require further information, please contact the nurse on call at 604.983.6700.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian O'Connor".

Brian A. O'Connor, MD, MHSc
Medical Health Officer
Vancouver Coastal Health, North Shore