Hepatitis A
Epidemiology of Hepatitis A

- Hepatitis A is endemic to the Philippines

- January - December 2017
  - 444 cases with 1 death
  - Case Fatality Rate 0.23%

- 7,134 deaths worldwide in 2016
What is Hepatitis A?

- It is a highly contagious infection resulting in inflammation of the liver.
- It is caused by the Hepatitis A virus.
- When inflamed, liver function may be affected.
- The Hepatitis A virus is one of the most frequent causes of foodborne infections.
Risk Factors for Hepatitis A

- Lack of safe water
- Poor sanitation
- Living in a household with an infected person
- Sexual partner of someone with acute hepatitis A infection
- Use of recreational drugs
- Sex between men
- Travel to areas of high endemicity
- Unvaccinated
How does one get infected with Hepatitis A?

- The virus is found in the stool and blood of infected people
- The hepatitis A virus is spread when someone ingests the virus, usually through:
  - Food or water contaminated with feces from an infected person (fecal-oral route)
  - Close physical contact (sexual contact, caring for Hep A patients)
You cannot get Hepatitis A from:

- Being coughed or sneezed on
- Sitting next to an infected person
- Hugging
- From breast milk
Signs and Symptoms

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Dark urine
- Diarrhea
- Clay-colored stools
- Joint pain
- Jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes)
- Itchiness
Treatment

- There is NO specific treatment
- Management is supportive
  - ✓ Goals: maintain comfort, adequate nutritional balance and replacement of lost fluids from vomiting and diarrhea
- Hospitalization not indicated in most cases
Complications

- Hepatitis A does not cause chronic liver disease
- Almost everyone recovers with lifelong immunity… HOWEVER
- It can cause FULMINANT HEPATITIS (ACUTE LIVER FAILURE) which can be fatal
Duration of Symptoms

- Less than 2 months, 0-15% can have symptoms for as long as 6 months
- Many people, specially **children**, have **NO** symptoms
- Infected persons can transmit the virus up to **2** WEEKS **before** and up to **3** WEEKS **after** symptoms appear
Prevention

- Improved sanitation, food safety and immunization
  - ✓ Adequate supplies of safe drinking water
  - ✓ Proper disposal of sewage within communities
 ✓ Personal hygiene practices such as regular handwashing before meals, before preparing food and after going to the bathroom

 ✓ Cooking food thoroughly

 ○ Hepatitis A vaccination