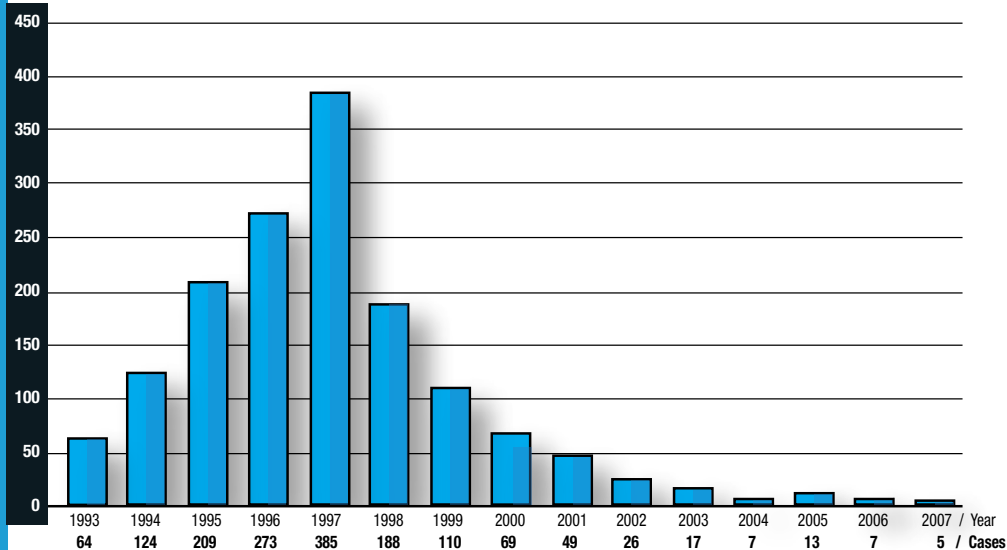


## Hepatitis A

## Minimizing the Ill Employee Threat — With a hep A Vaccine Program

**Ill employees are a major threat to the life of a food business. Many are screened out with rigorously enforced ill worker policies and procedures.**

**But then there is hepatitis A ...**



*This profile of hep A reductions follows the introduction of the Southern Nevada / Las Vegas Health Card Program, where food workers are vaccinated for hep A as a condition of their employment.*

## Best Practice Endorsements:

**GlaxoSmithKline vaccines are endorsed by the Handwashing For Life Institute for restaurants and resorts within endemic zones or with staff who travel to those zones, including Mexico.**

The Handwashingforlife® Institute actively supports and recommends the products and services of members who meet the criteria for leadership in hand hygiene related interventions. These criteria include:

- + *Product or service must meet Institute standard of Best Practice within applicable category.*
- + *Forum member must demonstrate commitment to advancing the Science of Hand Hygiene and be a top quartile supplier, as measured by: Customer satisfaction with initial product or service and follow-up support.*



### Best Practice Products

To see a full list of GlaxoSmithKline vaccines and prescribing information, please visit: [www.gskvaccines.com](http://www.gskvaccines.com)

## Fact vs Fiction

Myths typically live well beyond the science.  
These facts just might save your life and that of your business...

### Fact:

- 1] The asymptomatic (no symptoms) profile of hep A makes it impossible to keep them out of the workforce. Jaundice does make exclusion easier but you may well be too late to avoid an outbreak. Infected workers are likely shedding pathogens many days or even weeks prior. Hepatitis A is most contagious before symptoms appear. A documented handwashing program is the best daily defense.
- 2] No specific treatment or cure is available for persons with hepatitis A. The hep A virus (HAV) causes about 100 deaths per year in the USA. The best long-term defense is immunization with the vaccine.
- 3] Symptoms are similar to the flu at the start but often last longer. Work absenteeism can vary from 27-60 days. About 15% of people infected with HAV will have prolonged or relapsing symptoms over a 6-9 month period.
- 4] Immune globulin is not a cure for hep A but an alternative to long-term vaccines such as Havrix and Twinrix. IG is often recommended to the public where exposure to an ill worker may have occurred. The hep A vaccine is an alternative according to a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine in October, 2007.  
  
Short-term protection against hepatitis A is available from immune globulin. It can be given before and within 2 weeks of coming in contact with HAV. Revaccination with IG is needed every 3 to 5 months.  
  
Hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for all persons visiting or working in countries with a high endemicity of HAV infection.
- 5] Fecal-hand-oral is the primary transmission path. Most infections result from direct contact or contact with surfaces and food contaminated by the ill worker. Handwashing is the primary intervention.
- 6] USA rates as a nation are much lower than Mexico, South America and most of Asia thanks to immunization programs but much of the hospitality workforce in the USA miss the school age programs. A foreign national foodservice worker from a country without a childhood immunization program, can easily pickup the disease from others within the hosting household during home country visits.
- 7] Ask any operator in Las Vegas, where their program continues to keep hep A cases very low (see reverse). Is it really wise for an operator to convert their challenge to retain employees into a hazard for their customers?

## Hepatitis A

### Myth:

**Infected employees can be excluded from work by simply monitoring for jaundice.**

**Hepatitis A is easily cured and is not deadly.**

**Hepatitis A is like the flu and lasts 24-48 hours.**

**Hep A can be cured with immune globulin (IG).**

**Handwashing does not protect people from the hep A virus.**

**Pre-school immunization programs have all but eliminated hep A in the USA.**

**A corporate or geographic driven (high endemicity) hep A vaccine program is too costly for restaurants considering employee turnover rates.**