



# Communicable Disease Report

## Summit County

### June 6, 2019

# Hepatitis A Outbreak Update

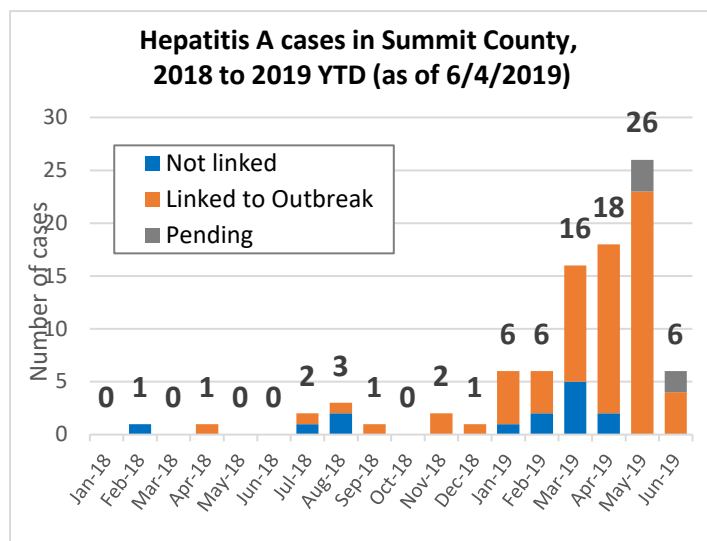


Since 2016, viral hepatitis A community outbreaks have been reported in 22 states nationwide. As of May 31, 2019, these multiple outbreaks have resulted in 19,029 reported cases, 10,869 hospitalizations, and 185 deaths. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) declared a statewide outbreak in early 2018, and so far there have been 2997 cases, 1796 hospitalizations, and 10 deaths (as of June 3, 2019).

In this outbreak, hepatitis A has been transmitted via contact with objects, food or drink contaminated with fecal matter from an infected person, or by close person to person contact. People in the following groups have been identified as being at higher risk for becoming infected with hepatitis A, and for having greater complications from the disease:

- People with direct contact with individuals infected with the virus
- Men who have sex with men
- People who use street drugs, whether they are injected or not
- People who are incarcerated
- People experiencing homelessness
- People who have traveled to other areas of the U.S. currently experiencing outbreaks

According to the CDC and ODH, **the most effective way to prevent hepatitis A is by vaccination**, especially for at-risk populations. *Good handwashing practices* will also help prevent transmission of the hepatitis A virus.



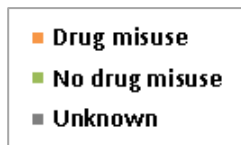
In 2018, hepatitis A outbreak cases were concentrated in southern Ohio, with Butler, Franklin, Montgomery and Hamilton Counties in southwest Ohio reporting the highest number of cases. Summit County reported 11 cases total in 2018, of which 7 were linked to the outbreak. Typically, an average of 7 cases per year are reported Summit County (based on case counts from 2010-2017).

**Since the beginning of 2019, Summit County has experienced an alarming increase in the number of reported hepatitis A cases**, as indicated in Figure 1. *There have been additional 78 cases reported in 2019, of which 63 have been linked to the outbreak.* Summit County and Ohio outbreak cases are summarized in Table 1.

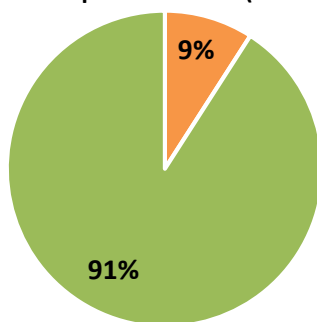
**Table 1. Risk factor statistics for Ohio and Summit County hepatitis A cases**

	Summit County, 1/1/2018 - 6/4/2019		Ohio, 1/5/2018 - 5/28/2019
	Outbreak Cases	All Cases	ODH Outbreak Cases
Case Count	70	89	2997
% Hospitalized	74%	70%	60%
% With hepatitis C	54%	53%	25%
% Reporting drug misuse	82%	77%	53%

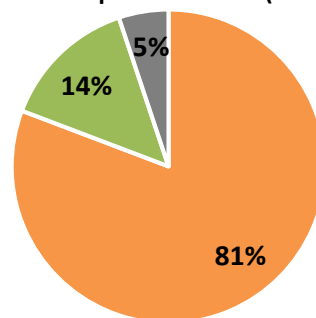
**Figure 2 (to right). Reported drug misuse in Summit County hepatitis A cases, 2018 and 2019 (as of 6/4/2019)**



**2018 Hepatitis A cases (n = 11)**

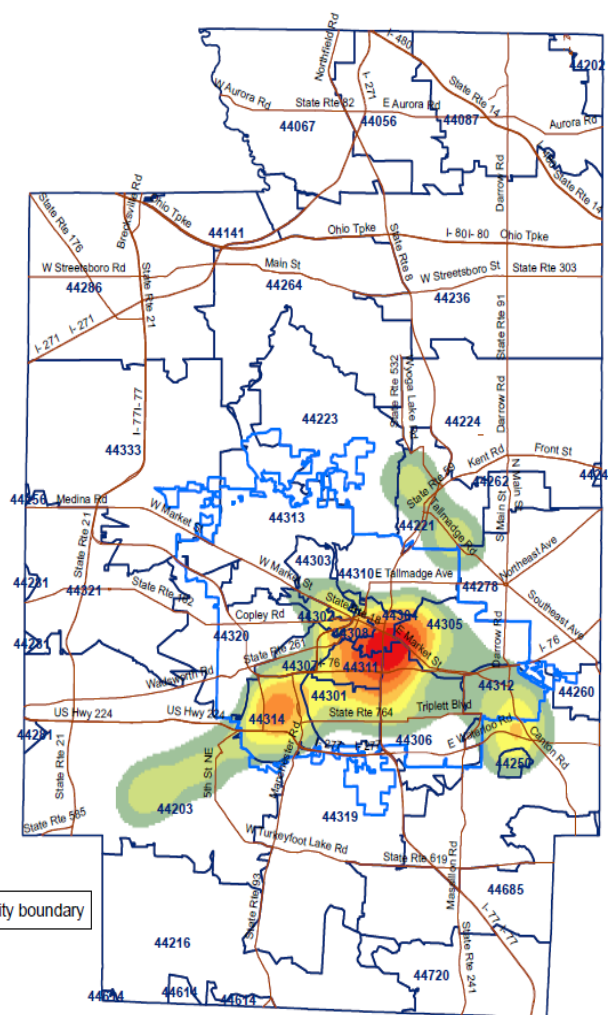


**2019 Hepatitis A Cases (n = 78)**



Drug misuse, especially drugs that are injected, has been reported at higher rates in 2019 hepatitis A cases, suggesting that hepatitis A is circulating among at-risk populations in Summit County (Figure 2). The heat density map in Figure 3 indicates the locations in Summit County with the greatest concentration of cases: Akron (University of Akron, Middlebury, South, Ellet, and Kenmore neighborhoods), Barberton, Cuyahoga Falls, and Lakemore/Springfield Township.

**Figure 3. Heat density map of hepatitis A cases in Summit County, 1/1/2018-6/4/2019.**



Data source: Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS)

### ***Prevention efforts in Summit County***

The Communicable Disease Unit at Summit County Public Health has worked with community partners since March, 2018 to provide the hepatitis A vaccine to at-risk populations. As of June 6, 2019, SCPH has administered 423 hepatitis A vaccines through SCPH needle exchange sites, drug rehabilitation programs, community meals, correctional facilities, homeless shelters and other community service agencies. In addition, most Summit County hospitals are administering the hepatitis A vaccine to at-risk emergency department patients.

**Prepared on June 6, 2019 by:**

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**For more information:**

Summit County Public Health: <https://www.scph.org/news/hepatitis-outbreak>

Ohio Department of Health Hepatitis A Outbreak Website: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/outbreak-response-bioterrorism-investigation-team/news/newsevent1>

CDC Hepatitis A outbreak information: <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/outbreaks/2017March-HepatitisA.htm>