



Communicable Disease Report Summit County March, 2019 Hepatitis A Outbreak Update

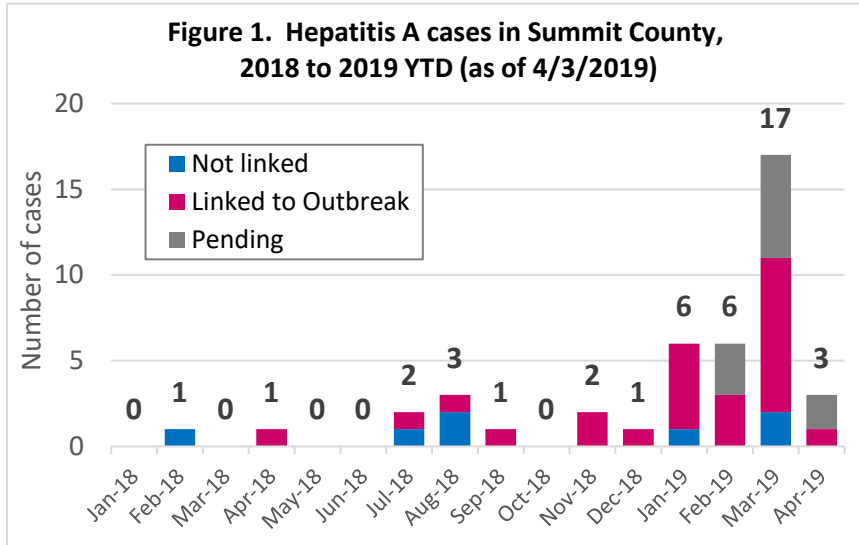


Since 2016, viral hepatitis A community outbreaks have been reported in 18 states nationwide. As of March 29, 2019, these multiple outbreaks have resulted in 15,000 reported cases, 8,500 hospitalizations, and 140 deaths. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) declared a statewide outbreak in early 2018, and so far there have been 2044 cases, 1259 hospitalizations, and 7 deaths.

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.



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 32 cases reported in 2019, of which

19 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 (HAV) cases

	Summit County, 1/1/2018 - 4/3/2019		Ohio, 1/5/2018 - 4/1/2019
	Outbreak Cases	All Cases	ODH Outbreak Cases
Case Count	26	43	2044
% Hospitalized	85%	78%	62%
% With hepatitis B or C	62%	51%	28%
% Reporting drug misuse	77%	65%	67%

Figure 2. Hepatitis A cases in Summit County with reported drug misuse, 2018 to 2019 YTD (as of 4/3/2019)

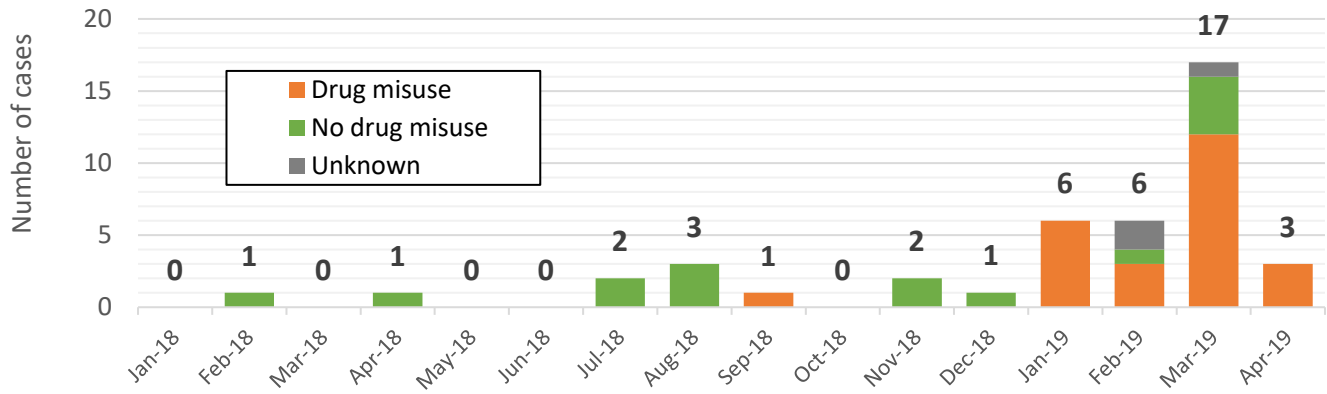
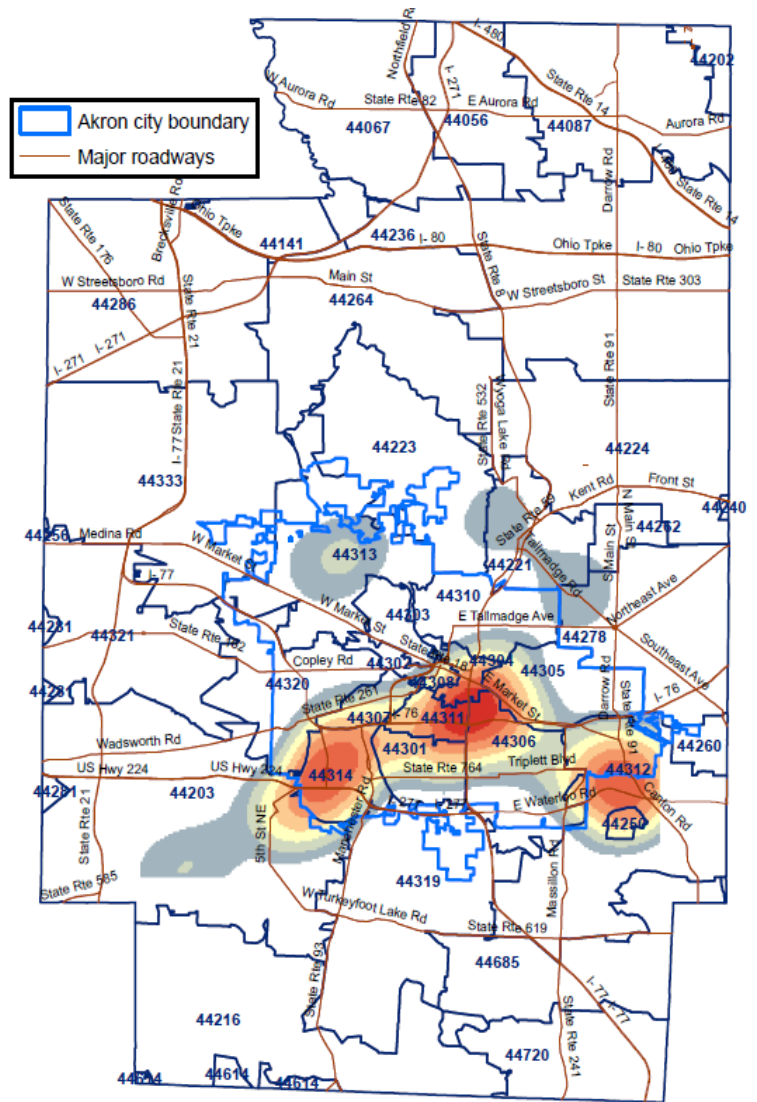


Figure 3 (to right). Heat density map of hepatitis A cases in Summit County, 1/1/2018-4/3/2019.

Drug misuse, especially drugs that are injected, have been reported at higher rates in 2019 hepatitis A cases, suggesting that hepatitis A is circulating among this population in Summit County. The distribution of cases reporting drug misuse are shown in Figure 2. In addition, the heat density map in Figure 3 indicates the locations in Summit County with the greatest concentration of cases: East Akron/Middlebury, Ellet, Kenmore and Lakemore/Springfield Township.



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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>