



Township of Mendham

INCORPORATED MARCH 29, 1749

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August 15, 2019

On Tuesday, July 2, 2019, Morris County Office of Health Management (MCOHM) received a laboratory report for an individual infected with hepatitis A. Upon investigation, MCOHM learned that the infected individual worked as a food handler at a private club located in Mendham Township. Upon learning of the infected individual's occupation, the MCOHM consulted with the NJ Department of Health, Communicable Disease Service.

Further investigation by MCOHM on the same date, confirmed that the infected individual was a food handler. The food handler was excluded from work and required to provide medical clearance from a physician in order to return to work. MCOHM conducted an onsite investigation of the facility's food service operations. The investigation revealed compliance with hand hygiene and glove use. No food which may have been handled by the infected food handler was noted.

On Friday, July 5, 2019, MCOHM held a conference call with the NJ Department of Health Communicable Disease Services (NJDOH CDS) and the club to discuss patron notification and further actionable steps. Recommendation was made for all unvaccinated exposed individuals to receive post exposure prophylaxis by July 14, 2019 (two weeks from the last day the food handler was infectious and working). A letter written by MCOHM in consultation with the NJDOH CDS advising patrons of the exposure was disseminated by the club to its entire membership. Notice was also posted at the facility. Mendham Township's Board of Health was notified and has followed all appropriate protocol in accordance with privacy rules.

Since the initial notification to club members, several secondary cases related to the infected food handler have been identified. Secondary cases related to the food handler may develop until August 19, 2019, which is 50 days from the date the food handler was last infectious (the incubation period for hepatitis A is 15-50 days).

On Thursday, July 25, 2019, MCOHM conducted a follow-up inspection of the club's food service operations. During this inspection, MCOHM:

1. Provided instruction on food handling, employee hygiene, food storage, dating of foods, and other pertinent regulatory items.
2. Provided instruction on and directed staff to perform sanitization of food contact surfaces, equipment, flatware, etc.
3. Provided an FDA manual pertaining to employee health, hygiene, and proper food handling.
4. Requested increased cleaning of restroom facilities and possible fomites (e.g. commonly used surfaces, doorknobs, locker rooms areas, etc).
5. Scheduled an onsite food handling class for Tuesday, August 6. The training included an interactive activity with food handlers to emphasize the importance of handwashing.

Throughout this investigation, the club has been, and remains cooperative in taking all recommended actions by MCOHM and NJDOH CDS. Furthermore, the club provided documentation ensuring all food and beverage service employees received post exposure prophylaxis (PEP). MCOHM remains in daily communication with the NJDOH CDS, the club and the Township until further notice.

For more information on Hepatitis A, please see the NJDOH [fact sheet](#).

If any member of the public has questions or concerns regarding Hepatitis A or possible exposure please contact: Kathy Basile, RN, MS, MSN Public Health Nurse, Morris County Office of Health Management at kbasile@co.morris.nj.us or 973-682-4942.