

# Hepatitis E

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Hepatitis E is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis E virus. It is rare in Australia. Some infected people, especially children, will have no symptoms. If symptoms do occur, they can include fever, tiredness, stomach pain, loss of appetite and nausea. This is sometimes followed by dark urine and yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice).

## How it spreads

Hepatitis E spreads when the virus enters the body by the mouth, for example when people eat contaminated food or drink contaminated water. Most Australians who get hepatitis E catch it overseas. Within Australia, people sometimes become infected after eating undercooked pork (pig) products, but this is very rare. Person-to-person transmission is not common.

## Exclusion period

Exclude until at least 7 days after jaundice starts, or if there is no jaundice, until 2 weeks after onset of other symptoms.

## Actions for educators and other staff

Contact your local public health unit for advice if you have a case of hepatitis E in your service.

Follow the exclusion period in the *Staying healthy* guidelines.

Ensure staff and children have good hand and toileting hygiene.

Ensure staff use appropriate cleaning practices, as described in the *Staying healthy* guidelines.

## Actions for parents and carers

Make sure you and your child wash their hands regularly, especially after going to the toilet or changing nappies.

Keep the child at home for the exclusion period, or longer, until they are feeling well. You will need a medical certificate of recovery from a doctor before your child can return to the care service.

## More information about hepatitis E

See healthdirect for more information on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of hepatitis E ([healthdirect.gov.au/hepatitis](http://healthdirect.gov.au/hepatitis)).

To find out if a child needs medical help:

- use the online symptom checker ([healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker](http://healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker))
- speak to a registered nurse by calling the 24-hour health advice hotline on 1800 022 222.