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# Hepatitis A outbreak in New South Wales

Over the past three weeks approximately 150 cases of hepatitis A have been reported in New South Wales. Cases have been notified from both regional and metropolitan areas. Two-thirds of those patients sampled to date reported eating oysters. Half of these originated from Wallis Lake on the State's mid-north coast. The New South Wales Health Department has urged people to

avoid eating oysters from Wallis Lake.

Hepatitis A is a viral disease with an average incubation period of approximately 30 days. Symptoms include fever, malaise, nausea, anorexia and abdominal discomfort followed by jaundice. The illness usually lasts one to two weeks and occasionally requires hospitalisation.

Further person-to-person spread can be prevented by observing good hygiene practices including hand washing before meals. Household contacts of cases should be given immunoglobulin.

The New South Wales Health Department is continuing to investigate.