# Hepatitis A outbreak in Prague worsens with over 450 cases and 6 deaths



A concerning outbreak of hepatitis A has emerged in Prague and surrounding areas of the Czech Republic, prompting urgent warnings from health officials and the UK Foreign Office. As of early May 2025, over 450 confirmed cases have been reported in the Czech Republic, including six fatalities. This stark rise in infections represents a significant uptick from the previous year, which saw a total of 636 cases and two deaths reported throughout 2024. The regions most affected include Central Bohemia, Moravia-Silesia, and the capital itself, all of which have seen a marked increase in cases.

Health officials have indicated that the current outbreak has spread rapidly, particularly among adolescents, young adults, and vulnerable populations such as drug users and the homeless. MUDr. Barbora Macková, chief hygienist and director of the Public Health Institute, noted that the conditions for spreading the virus are exacerbated by poor hygiene practices. Furthermore, she highlighted the worrying trend of a rising number of susceptible individuals in the population who lack immunity, either through prior exposure or vaccination.

The Czech Health Ministry has underscored the critical role of hygiene in transmission, linking the rise to poor sanitation conditions. Such outbreaks have been increasingly evident due to mobility and social interactions, particularly following increased gatherings during events and vacations. The ministry advocates for stringent hygiene practices, advising both locals and travellers to steer clear of raw salads, unpeeled fruits, and undercooked seafood, which may pose risks of infection. In the context of travel, the advice extends to the avoidance of ice in drinks and caution against using public water sources for drinking and brushing teeth.

The most noticeable spike appears to have begun in January 2025, with nearly 400 individuals—many of them schoolchildren—contracting the disease, marking a dramatic rise from 128 cases the previous year. This situation is not isolated to Prague; nearby regions, such as Ustí nad Labem, also report rapid transmission, with at least 276 cases confirmed, including children.

In response to the outbreak, the Czech health authorities are implementing public health measures, including vaccination campaigns aimed at controlling further spread. The vaccination strategy is especially critical for high-risk groups, including men who have sex with men and frequent travellers to areas with diminished sanitation and food hygiene. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control has also highlighted the importance of vaccination and monitoring, noting vaccine shortages as a challenge in response efforts.

Consequently, holidaymakers planning to visit the Czech Republic are advised to take precautionary measures and remain informed about the outbreak, as the long incubation period of hepatitis A—ranging from 14 to 50 days—means that many may be unknowingly contagious. Public health experts continue to stress the value of hygiene and informed travel practices that could mitigate the spread of this infectious disease.

The implications of such health warnings are profound, particularly for a country that has long been a popular destination for tourists, particularly from the UK. The potential association of the outbreak with public environments frequented by tourists highlights the intersection between public health and travel advisories, urging all visitors to exercise vigilance regarding their hygiene practices during their stay in the Czech Republic.

As this situation develops, it serves as a stark reminder of the critical importance of maintaining rigorous health standards and responsiveness to outbreaks, emphasising that even the most popular holiday hotspots can pose unforeseen health risks.

Reference Map: 1: Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
2: Paragraph 5
3: Paragraph 5
4: Paragraph 6
5: Paragraph 3
6: Paragraph 5
7: Paragraph 3

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/travel/uk-tourist-holiday-hotspot-hit-31688182> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://english.radio.cz/capital-central-bohemia-see-epidemic-level-rise-hepatitis-a-cases-8591983> - An article from Radio Prague International reports a significant increase in hepatitis A cases in Prague and Central Bohemia since January 2025. Nearly 400 individuals, including schoolchildren, have contracted the disease, marking an epidemic-level rise from the previous year's 128 cases. The article discusses the factors contributing to the spread, such as increased mobility and social interactions, and emphasizes the importance of vaccination and preventive measures to control the outbreak.
3. <https://www.romea.cz/en/czech-republic/czech-health-ministry-briefs-romea-cz-on-the-current-outbreak-of-hepatitis-a-among-children-in-ostrava-residential-hotels-are-not-the-main-site-of-infection> - Romea.cz provides insights from the Czech Health Ministry regarding a hepatitis A outbreak among children in Ostrava. Between April 22 and July 1, 2024, 44 infections were recorded, primarily in children aged 1 to 17. The article details the measures taken, including vaccinations and increased medical supervision, and clarifies that residential hotels are not the main sites of infection, with apartment buildings in Ostrava-Přívoz being the primary locations.
4. <https://www.sitata.com/en/alerts/d9aa6463-ed82-4088-9893-3d8ec45b3571> - Sitata reports on a hepatitis A outbreak in Ustí nad Labem, north of Prague, with at least 276 people infected, including 17 children in the past six days. The article highlights the rapid spread of the disease, indicating extensive exposure to contaminated food or water, and advises travelers to consider vaccination and exercise caution to avoid consuming contaminated food and water.
5. <https://www.sitata.com/en/alerts/largest-hepatitis-a-epidemic-in-czech-republic-since-1990> - Sitata reports on the largest hepatitis A epidemic in the Czech Republic since 1990, with over 400 people infected in the Southern Moravian region. The article attributes the increase to drug use and lack of proper hygiene, such as not washing hands regularly, and advises travelers to consider vaccination and exercise caution to avoid consuming contaminated food and water.
6. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/epidemiological-update-hepatitis-outbreak-eueea-mostly-affecting-men-who-have-sex-men-0> - The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) provides an update on a hepatitis A outbreak in the EU/EEA, primarily affecting men who have sex with men (MSM). The article discusses the importance of vaccination for MSM and their close contacts, noting vaccine shortages in some countries, including the Czech Republic, and suggests promoting vaccination at events like Pride festivals.
7. <https://www.globalhep.org/country-info/CZ> - The Global Hepatitis Programme (CGHE) outlines the Czech Republic's action plan to eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030. The plan includes reducing morbidity and mortality due to viral hepatitis, ensuring equitable access to prevention, testing, care, and treatment services, and emphasizes a coordinated, comprehensive, and integrated health system response.