

**The University of Tennessee
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
Occupational Health Program**

HEPATITIS A VIRUS

People at Risk: Humans are the primary reservoir for hepatitis A virus (HAV), and nonhuman primate infections result from contact with infected humans. However, more than 200 cases of HAV infection in humans have been associated with nonhuman primates. Susceptible species include chimpanzees and other great apes, marmosets, owl monkeys, cynomolgus monkeys, and patas monkeys.

Transmission: Transmission is by the fecal-oral route. Some outbreaks have been attributed to contaminated food and water. **Usually nonhuman primates acquire the disease from man.**

Symptoms: Signs in an infected monkey are less severe than the disease in humans and are often subclinical. In humans, the disease varies from a mild illness lasting 1-2 weeks to a severely debilitating illness lasting several months. After an incubation period of about a month, patients experience a rapid onset of fever, lack of appetite, nausea, and abdominal discomfort, followed within a few days by jaundice. Children often have mild disease without jaundice.

Prevention: A vaccine is available for the control of HAV in humans. The use of protective clothing, good personal hygiene, and appropriate practices of sanitation of equipment and facilities also will minimize the potential for zoonotic transmission.