



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2000 WWW.SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Jason Hoppin
Communications Manager
831-454-3401

COUNTY DECLARES END TO LOCAL HEPATITIS A OUTBREAK

Santa Cruz County Public Health Officer Dr. Arnold Leff on Tuesday declared an end to the hepatitis A outbreak that began afflicting local patients in April 2017.

Overall, Santa Cruz County saw 76 confirmed cases of hepatitis A, including one death where hepatitis A was a contributing factor. To address the outbreak, the County conducted widespread outreach with the public, local businesses and impacted populations, consulted with top state public health officials and held several free vaccine clinics.

"I'd like to thank the public and especially our staff, who worked extraordinarily hard to prevent this outbreak from becoming even worse," Leff said. "To prevent future outbreaks, it is imperative that we maintain public awareness and our sanitation infrastructure. We also urge people at risk of contracting hepatitis A, including drug users and people who live in unsanitary conditions, or individuals who have sexual contact with those populations, to seek vaccinations through their medical provider or a local safety-net clinic."

Hepatitis A is spread through person-to-person contact and is potentially fatal for medically vulnerable persons. Through January, there have been 1,577 cases across three states, including 45 deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.