

## Acute hepatitis A

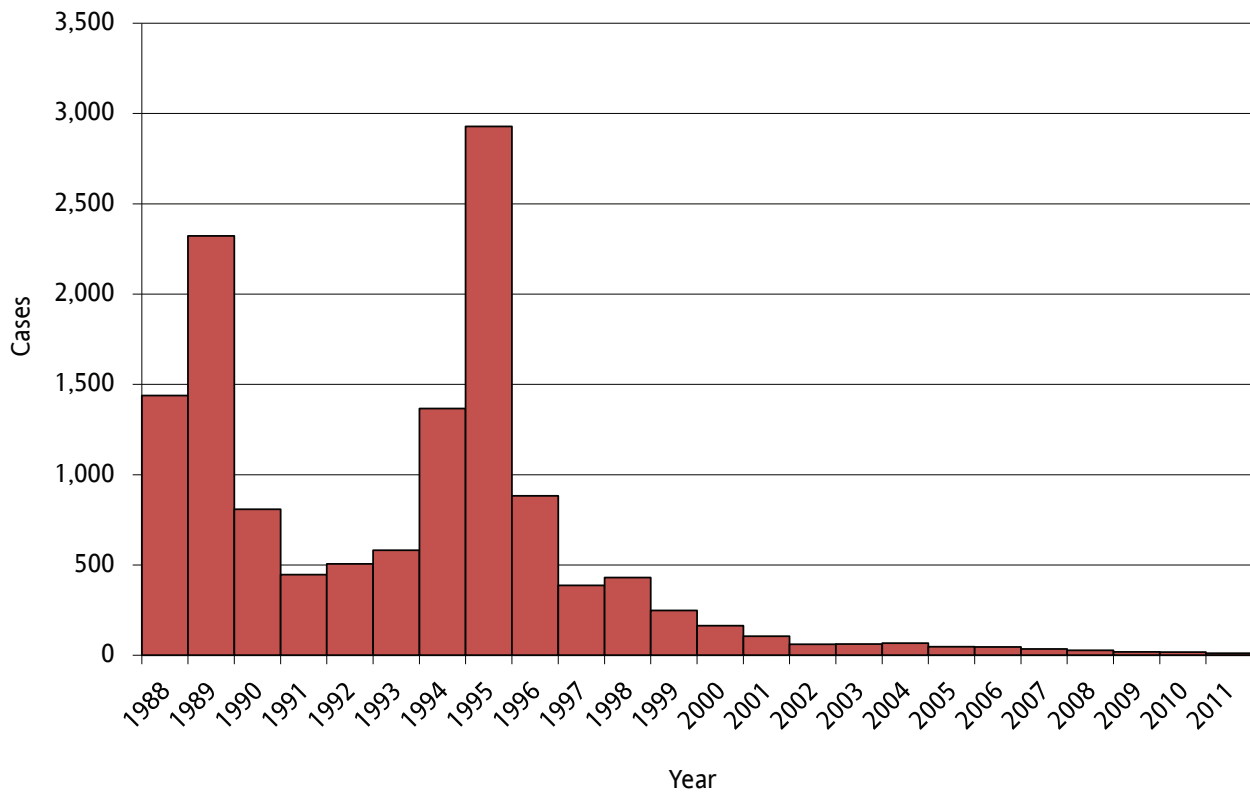
**H**epatitis A is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus, which infects humans via fecal-oral transmission. Historically, in Oregon, hepatitis A can occur in situations ranging from isolated cases of disease to statewide outbreaks. However, since the licensure of the hepatitis A vaccine in 1995–1996, rates of infection have declined nationally and in Oregon, one of the higher incidence states. Most cases in Oregon are sporadic and occur mainly in persons who travel outside the United States. Oregon has seen small clusters of hepatitis A infections among injection drug users and jail inmates. There were no outbreaks of hepatitis A in 2011. The last outbreak of hepatitis A in Oregon occurred in 2006.

Good personal hygiene and proper sanitation can help prevent hepatitis A. Vaccines are recommended for long-term prevention of hepatitis A in all Oregon children 1 year of age and older, as well as for adults in high-risk groups.

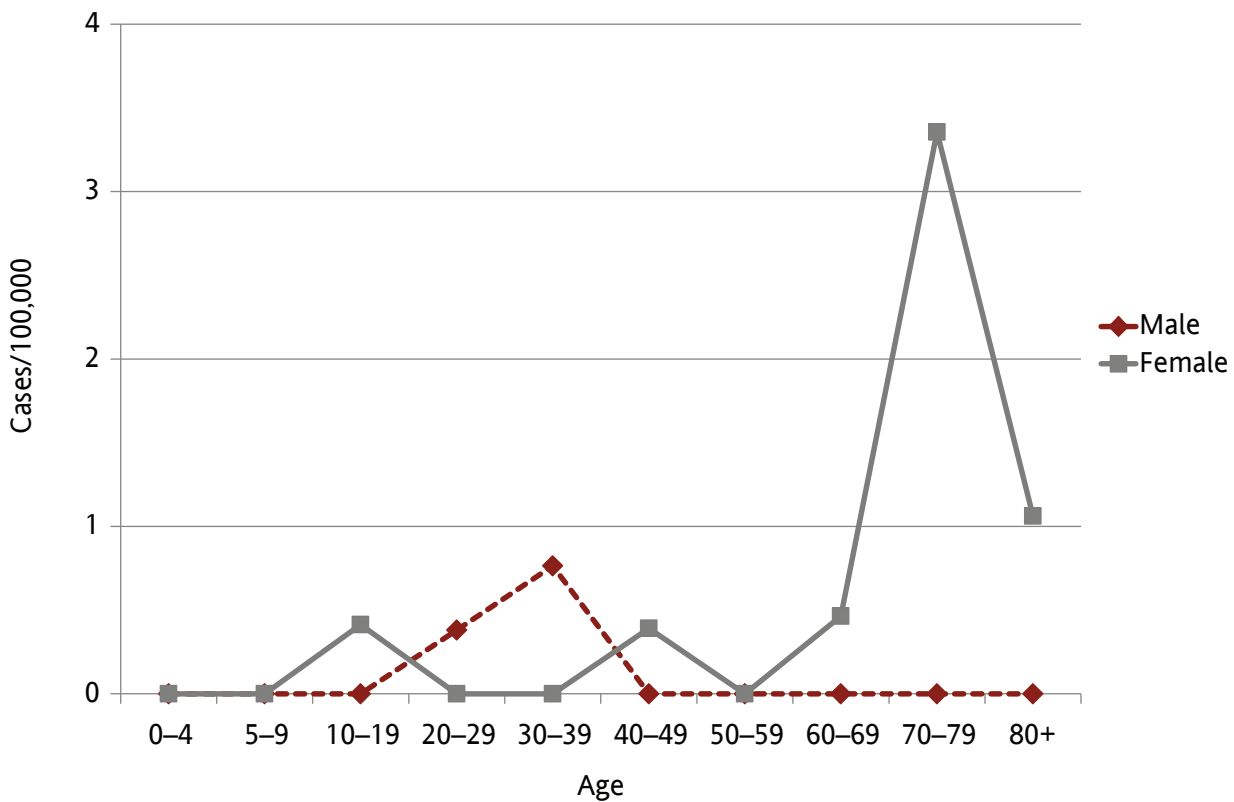
In 2007, Oregon adopted the CDC case definition; laboratory positive, asymptomatic infections are no longer reportable. Recent changes in post-exposure prophylaxis include vaccination instead of immunoglobulin for immune-competent contacts aged 1–40 years. For those under 12 months and over 40 years of age, or with immune-compromising conditions, immune globulin is still recommended.

In 2011, Oregon logged 11 cases of acute hepatitis A (a historic low). Five (46%) of the 11 cases in 2011 were acquired by venturing outside of Oregon, often to countries with high rates of hepatitis A, such as Mexico. Such persons placing themselves at elevated risk should receive a dose of hepatitis A vaccine as soon as travel is considered. Completion of the hepatitis A vaccination series (administered according to the licensed schedule) is recommended for long-term protection. Fifty-four percent of cases (n=6) had no identifiable risk factor for acquisition of hepatitis A infection. Ninety-one percent of cases were over 20 years of age.

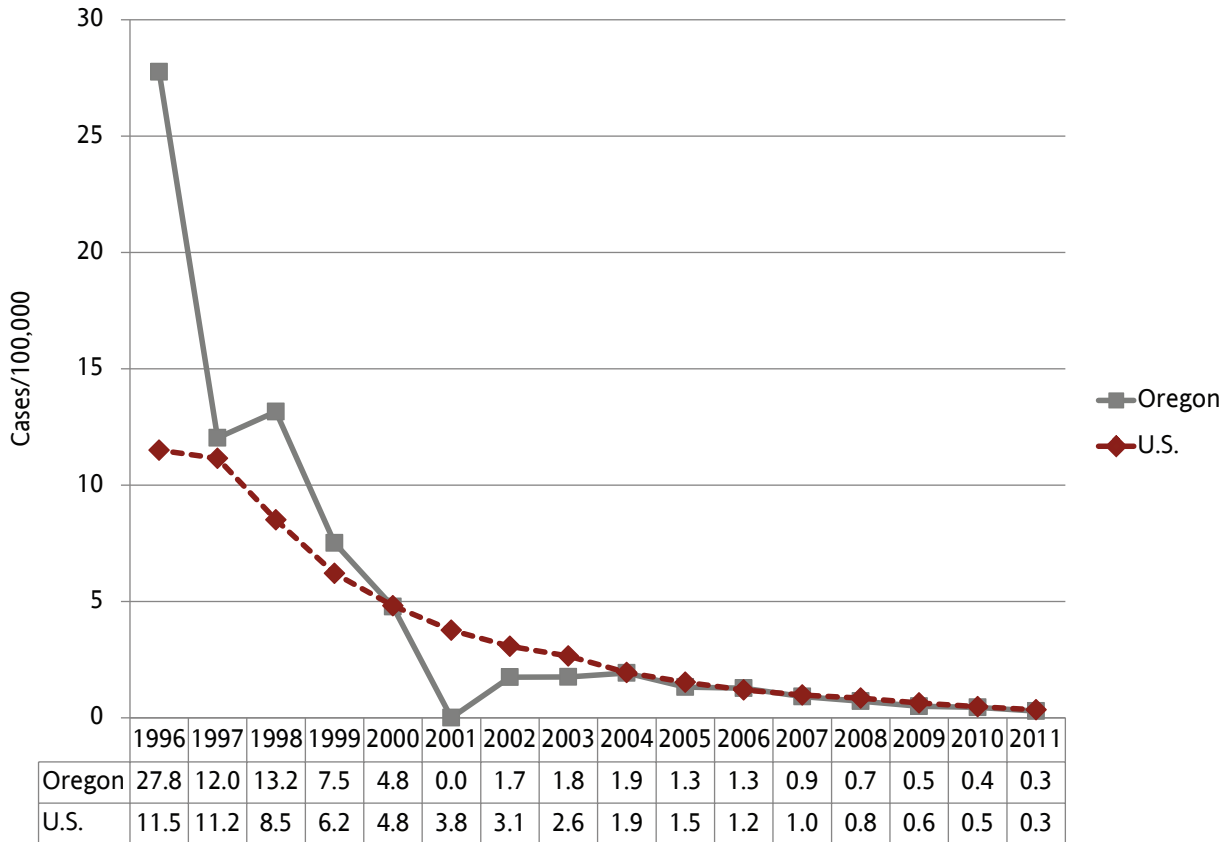
Hepatitis A by year: Oregon, 1988–2011



Incidence of hepatitis A by age and sex: Oregon, 2011



Incidence of hepatitis A: Oregon vs. nationwide, 1996–2011



Incidence of hepatitis A by county of residence: Oregon, 2002–2011

