Immune Globulin for Hepatitis A Virus Fact Sheet:

When is preventive treatment for possible exposure to hepatitis A recommended?
It is critical that you contact your local or state health department to get information on when or if preventive treatment is recommended. The following are situations in which preventive treatment is indicated:

- If you have had close personal contact with a hepatitis A-infected person (this includes contacts such as household members, caregivers or babysitters, sexual contacts, people who share illegal drugs).
- If you have eaten food that might have been contaminated with hepatitis A virus. You will know this if your local health department contacted you or made an announcement.

Who should receive immune globulin after possible hepatitis A exposure?

- If you are between the ages of 1 and 40, you are likely to get the hepatitis A vaccine.
- If you are less than 1 year old or older than 40 years old, you are likely to get immune globulin, although vaccine can be used if immune globulin is unavailable. Also, your risk of Hepatitis A infection from this specific exposure can be taken into account in whether to use hepatitis A vaccine or immune globulin for prevention.
- Immune globulin should be used if your child is younger than 1 year old, you have problems with your immune system, you have cancer, chronic liver or kidney disease, you are receiving chemotherapy or certain medication such as steroids, or you have other medical problems and hepatitis A vaccine cannot be given.

What is immune globulin?
Immune globulin is a substance made from human blood that contains antibodies that protect against infection. It is given as a shot and provides protection against Hepatitis A for approximately 3 months. Immune globulin can be given to prevent infection after exposure to the Hepatitis A virus.

How does immune globulin work?
Immune globulin provides protection against hepatitis A virus by giving you antibodies that fight the disease. When administered within 2 weeks after an exposure to Hepatitis A Virus, immune globulin is 80%-90% effective in preventing Hepatitis A infection. Immune globulin must be given within 2 weeks after exposure for the best protection.

What are the risks from IG?
Pain and tenderness at the site where the IG was given, itching, hives and swelling also may occur. There is a very low risk of transmitting blood borne diseases, however, testing and processing decrease this risk further. Severe allergic reactions are rare. Severe allergic reaction has been reported after more than one administration to people with known immunoglobulin A (IgA) deficiency; so, immune globulin should not be
administered to these people.

**Who should contact their health care provider before receiving immune globulin?**
- Persons with a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose of immune globulin.
- Persons with a serious allergic reaction to latex. Most people who have contact allergy to latex can receive immune globulin.
- Persons with certain antibody deficiencies (such as immunoglobulin A deficiency). These persons may receive a special form of immune globulin by vein.
- Persons who have severe problems with bleeding. Your provider may decide it is safe for you to receive immune globulin in your arm, or they may decide to give it to you by vein.

**Are there interactions with immune globulin and other vaccines?**
Talk to your doctor if you/your child have received any vaccines in the last two weeks or will be receiving vaccines in the next three months.

Be sure to let your doctor know that you received Immune Globulin today.