Currently, four inactivated vaccines against hepatitis A virus are available. All four vaccines are safe and effective, with long-lasting protection. None of the vaccines are licensed for children aged under one year.

Hepatitis A vaccine can be given to anyone who wants to be immunized against the condition. However, people who travel to parts of the world where sanitation is not very good should be immunized.

Hepatitis B vaccine is available as monovalent formulations or in fixed combination with other vaccines, including diphtheria–tetanus–pertussis, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b, hepatitis A and inactivated polio vaccine. The immune responses and safety of these combinations of vaccines are comparable to those observed when the vaccines are administered separately.

Hepatitis B vaccination is recommended for all infants, older children and adolescents who were not vaccinated previously, and adults at risk for hepatitis B virus infection. The first dose of hepatitis B vaccine should be given within the first 24 hours after birth even in low-endemicity countries. The birth dose should be followed by two or three doses with a minimum interval of four weeks.

Hepatitis B vaccine has been introduced as part of routine immunization in all countries of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region, except Somalia and South Sudan. It is expected to be introduced in Somalia in early 2013. Fourteen countries in the Region are implementing the birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine.

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