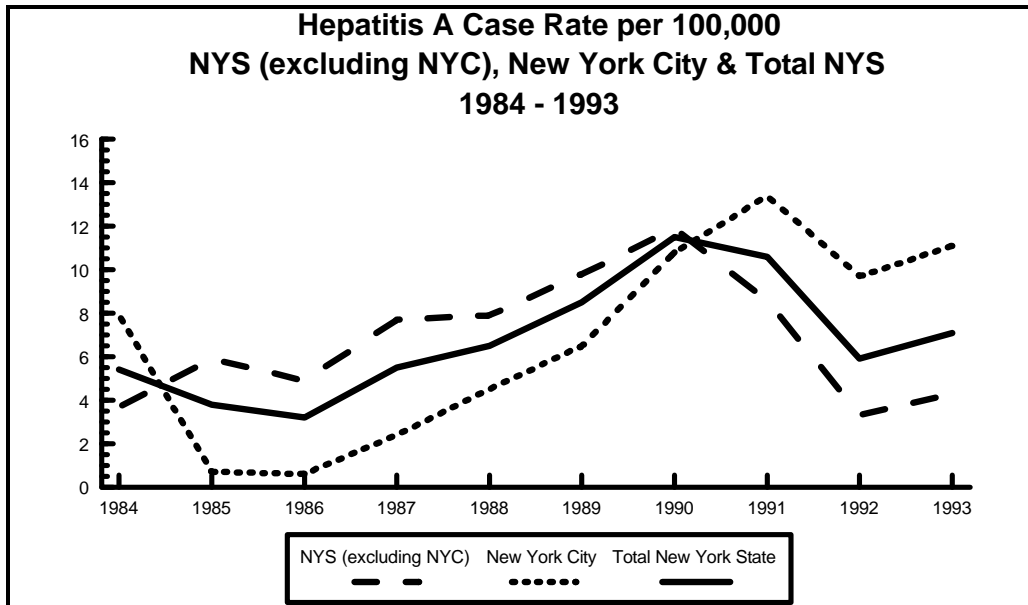


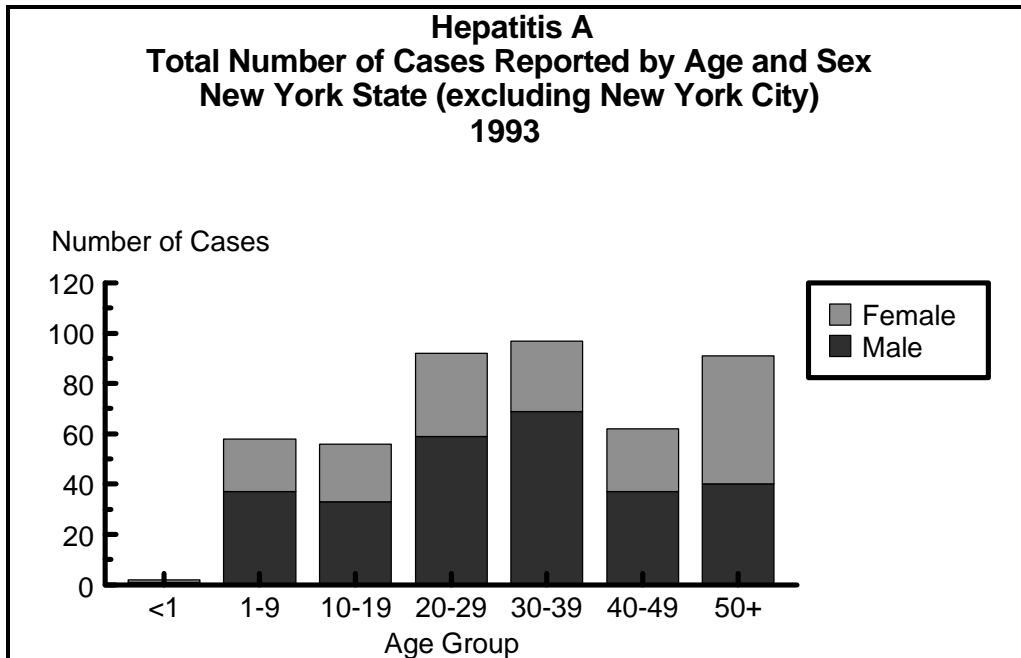
## **HEPATITIS A**

Among viral causes of gastroenteritis, only hepatitis A is reportable in New York State. Hepatitis A (HAV), formerly known as infectious hepatitis, is a viral infection affecting the liver. Illness tends to be mild in young children and more severe in adults.

Most cases occurring in New York State are due to person-to-person transmission and have resulted in several community wide outbreaks. On average, more than 1,000 cases have been reported each year. Case rates have averaged below 10 per 100,000 per year since 1984.



Most cases occur in young adults and children. Since 1991, a shift in the age distribution occurred involving a distinct increase in people aged 20-40 years, primarily in New York City males.



Control measures involve enteric precautions and use of immune globulin prophylaxis for close contacts of cases. Prospects for the licensure of a hepatitis A vaccine are encouraging. A successful field trial of a single dose hepatitis A vaccine has already been completed in a New York Hasidic community.

No distinct seasonal pattern has been observed for hepatitis A.

