Hepatitis outbreak appears to be over

(EDITOR’S NOTE: After a check with local doctors on press day, it seems the Hepatitis A outbreak is over. No known causes for the cases and suspected cases are known at this time.)

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An apparent outbreak of Hepatitis A appears to be over in the Church Point area.

On Wednesday afternoon, Church Point physician Dr. Ty Hargroder said eight cases of Hepatitis A had been documented. He said he did not see any new cases on Wednesday.

“I don’t think we will see any new cases,” said Dr. Hargroder. “I think the worst is over.”

Hepatitis A is defined in Webster’s Dictionary as “a normally minor form of hepatitis caused by an RNA virus that does not persist in the blood; transmitted by ingestion of contaminated food or water.”

Dr. Hargroder said the cases documented involved children and adults. Some of the people were reported as living just inside the St. Landry Parish area near Church Point, as well as in Church Point and outside of the Church Point area in Acadia Parish. He said there were no common denominators with the people who were diagnosed with Hepatitis A.

Dr. Hargroder said the hepatitis was not transmitted by water supply.

“It does not appear to be in the water supply,” Dr. Hargroder said. He pointed out the reason he felt it was not in the water supply was because children in day care centers and schools, as well as those people in the nursing (See HEPATITIS, Page 2A)
home and in the jail system were not all sick.

Testing by the Board of Health supported Dr. Hargroder's contention that it was not the water supply. On November 5, the City of Church Point Water Plant received word from the Board that the city's drinking water had passed on every count.

"It's symptoms are very similar to the flu without the runny nose and coughing," Dr. Hargroder said. Symptoms include being fatigued, nausea, vomiting, pain in the liver area, dark urine or light colored stools and fever. He said if an individual has any of these symp-
globulin (ISE) within two weeks of exposure.

Most people recover from Hepatitis A within six months without any serious health problems. There is no specific treatment for Hepatitis A. Patients are told to rest for one to four weeks after a diagnosis is made, to avoid intimate contact and to consume foods high in protein. People who have come into contact with the patient should be given temporary immunization with immune serum Hepatitis A by "good hand washing and cleansing of your bathroom."

Dr. Hargroder said people can prevent contracting He said his office has a number of handouts for the public to read on Hepatitis A, hand washing and general sanitary rules.