

**Figure 4.12: Number of TB cases, crude rate per 100,000 population and 3-year rolling average 1991-2005.**

Source: Health Protection Surveillance Centre

### ***Incubation period***

The incubation period, defined by reaction to a tuberculin skin test is usually between 3-12 weeks.

### ***Period of infectivity***

The patient is infectious as long as there are viable TB organisms in the sputum.

### ***Clinical features***

The symptoms of TB depend on the organ affected. Two-thirds of those diagnosed with TB infection suffer from pulmonary TB. Early symptoms may be constitutional such as fatigue, night sweats and weight loss. Chest symptoms occur later in the disease and include cough which is usually productive, coughing blood and chest pain. Hoarseness is associated with laryngeal TB, a highly infectious form of TB.

### ***Vaccine schedule in Ireland***

The *Bacille Calmette Guerin* (BCG) vaccine contains a weakened ("attenuated") form of a bacteria related to the one that causes tuberculosis. This stimulates the immune system to protect against tuberculosis. BCG has contributed to the dramatic decline in TB over the past 40 years. BCG vaccination is usually given to newborn babies, but can also be given to older children and adults who are considered to be at risk of developing TB.

## **4.3 Disease where vaccination is recommended for specific "at-risk" Groups**

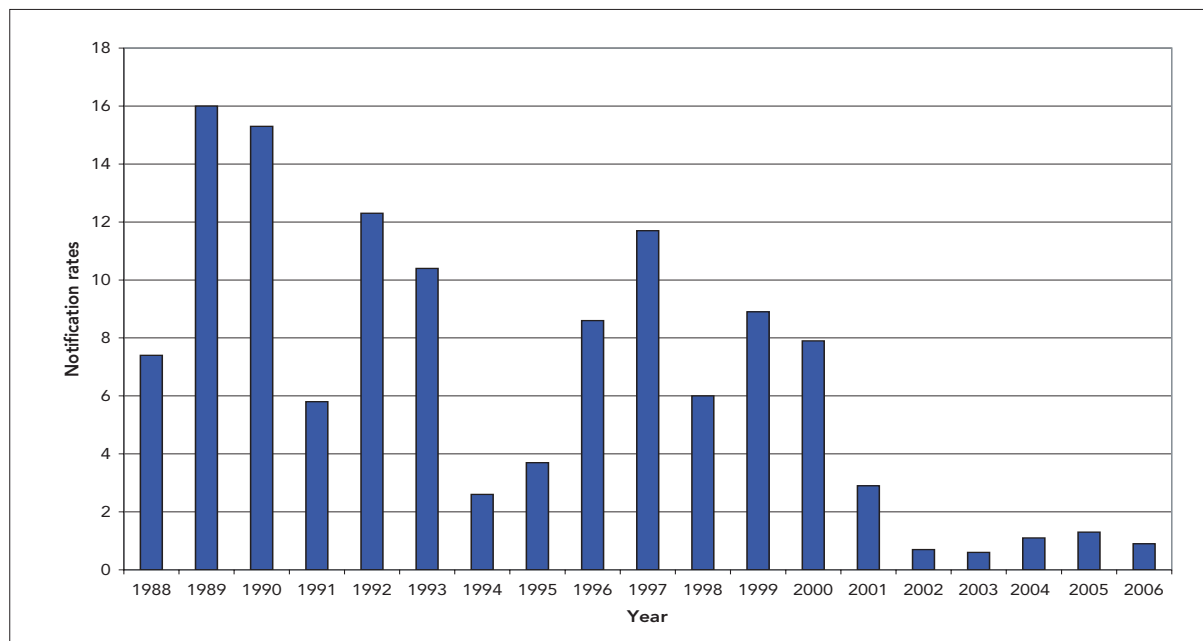
### **4.3.1 Hepatitis A**

#### ***Epidemiology of disease and impact of vaccination***

Hepatitis A is a viral infection of the liver caused by the hepatitis A virus.

#### ***Transmission***

Hepatitis A virus is primarily spread by the faeco-oral route facilitated by close person-to-person contact or through contaminated food or water. Transmission through sexual contact has also been reported. The number of cases notified in Ireland 1988-2006 are outlined in Figure 4.13.



**Figure 4.13. Number of hepatitis A cases notified in Ireland 1988-2006.**

Source: Health Protection Surveillance Centre

#### **Incubation period**

The average incubation period is 28-30 days (range 15-50).

#### **Period of infectivity**

People with hepatitis A infection are most infectious in the one to two weeks before onset of symptoms and in the first week of illness.

#### **Clinical features**

Infection in childhood can be asymptomatic or mild. Adults generally get a more severe illness, commencing with fever, anorexia and general malaise, followed a few days later by jaundice. The disease varies from a mild illness lasting one to two weeks to a more severe disabling illness lasting several months. A small proportion of cases develop overwhelming hepatitis. Death is estimated to occur in 0.1% to 0.3% of cases, although this increases to 1.8% in adults over 50 years of age.

#### **Vaccine recommendation in Ireland**

Vaccination is recommended for high-risk groups including

- People with recent close contact with infected individuals
- Susceptible travellers, including children, to high-risk areas (Africa, Asia, Central and South America, the Middle East and possibly Southern and Eastern Europe)
- Patients with chronic liver disease or chronic renal disease
- Persons with haemophilia and recipients of plasma-derived clotting factors
- Solid organ transplant recipients who have not been immunised previously should be immunised prior to transplantation
- Injecting drug users
- Clients of learning disability services whose capacity to maintain good standards of hygiene is limited, and their carers
- Men who have sex with men
- Homeless people and staff working with them if there is evidence locally of an increased rate of infection
- Some occupational groups.

For further information consult with the National Immunisation Guidelines available at [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie)