

EPI INVESTIGATOR

The Alachua County Health Department
Spring 2012



“Improving Public Health in Our Community Through Cooperation”

**Alachua County
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Editor
Sheila Griffis

World TB Day March 24th

Each year, we recognize World TB Day on March 24, often with a variety of activities leading up to the official day. This annual event commemorates the date in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch announced his discovery of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, the bacillus that causes Tuberculosis (TB). World TB Day provides an opportunity to raise awareness about TB-related problems and solutions, and to support worldwide TB-control efforts. CDC and our partners are committed to a world free of TB.

This year, CDC joins the global Stop TB Partnership in adopting the slogan “Stop TB in my lifetime” that goes with the theme of calling for a world free of TB. The slogan and theme encourage people all over the world, from the youngest to the oldest, to make an individual call for the elimination of TB, and say what changes they expect to take place in their lifetimes.

In their lifetimes, today’s children should expect to see a world where no one gets sick with TB. In their lifetimes, women and men should expect to see a world where no one dies from TB. All of us can have different hopes, such as for faster treatment; a quick, cheap, low-tech test that is

accessible to all; or an effective vaccine.

Call for a World Free of TB

We can only reach the goal of a world free of TB by working together to detect, treat, and prevent this disease. The fight to stop TB will only be successful if local, state, national, and international partners from all sectors of our society join resources and collaborate to find solutions.

Our united effort is needed to reach those at highest risk for TB and to identify and implement innovative strategies to improve testing and treatment among high-risk populations. CDC and its domestic and international partners, including the [National TB Controllers Association](#), [Stop TB USA](#), and the global [Stop TB Partnership](#), are taking many steps to stop further spread of TB and to reduce the overall burden of the disease. Efforts range from developing new treatment regimens and increasing the capacity of health professionals to provide adequate treatment, to issuing new recommendations for improved testing and treatment for U.S. immigrants.

Submitted By: Geneva Saulsberry RN
Alachua County Health Department

How You Can Become a Partner in the Fight Against TB

Find out more
about TB services



in your area. Reach out to your community and educate them about TB. Because many people are not aware of the impact of TB, local coalitions in many states and countries are convening educational and awareness activities related to World TB Day. Look to see how you can learn more and get involved.

Reference: <http://www.cdc.gov/tb/events/WorldTBDay/default.htm>

Locally, here at our health department, we will showcase this day on Friday, March 23, 2012. Our CDC Associate, Jacqueline McCullough has put together an exciting event that will be both fun and informative all at the same time. There will be games, prizes and snacks as well. Everyone is welcome to participate in this thought provoking day as we learn more about this disease that is present not only in this country, but in the entire world.

STD Awareness Month- April

Nationally the month of April is observed as STD Awareness Month. The focus of this month is to publicly raise awareness through preventive methods and to encourage individuals to get tested and to know their status. Statistically sexually transmitted diseases remain a public health challenge both nationally and locally. CDC estimates that approximately 19 million people, mostly between the ages of 15-24, will be infected each year. Although the numbers have significantly decreased since prevention and education has been the focus, there is still a profound need to decrease the prevalence of STD’s. Ensuring that everyone has access to STD prevention, treatment and care covers all of the levels of prevention. The theme for this month is “The 3T’s to prevent the spread of STDs: Talk, Test, and Treat.” **Talk** to your partner and your health care provider about risk factors, safer sex methods and how to get tested. Get **Tested**, find a close location and make an appointment. And **Treat** the disease and avoid additional health problems. The Alachua County Health Department supports the focus of primary prevention using education, but also understands the importance of testing and treating. We encourage the community to help stop the spread of Sexually Transmitted Diseases, get tested and know your status.

For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/std/>, <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chdalachua/> or call (352)334-7900

Submitted By: Jacquelyn R. McCullough
PHAP Associate


**Alachua County
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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH

Increased Chickenpox in Alachua County

By: Isabel Anasco, RN

Epidemiology/Hepatitis Coordinator
Alachua County Health Department

On February 22, 2012, the Alachua County Health Department Epidemiology Program was notified of an increase of chickenpox in one of the private schools located in Alachua County. The principal of the school reported that several students came down with the rash and were sent home. As of March 20th, it had affected 28 students and 1 teacher. All affected students were not immunized against chickenpox.

Efforts are underway to keep chicken pox from spreading. Letters were sent home to parents informing them of the pox increase of. The Alachua County Health Department is urging parents to have their child immunized.

Chickenpox is a very contagious disease. You or your child may be at risk if you have never had chickenpox or have never gotten the vaccine. Chickenpox causes a blister-like rash, itching, tiredness, and fever. This can make you feel sick and very uncomfortable and cause you to miss 5 to 7 days of school or work.

Chickenpox vaccine is the best way to protect you and your child from chickenpox. Also, when you get vaccinated, you protect others in your community. This is especially important for people who cannot get vaccinated, such as those with weakened immune systems and pregnant women.

Chickenpox can be severe for babies, adolescents, adults, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems. It can cause—

- dehydration
- pneumonia
- bleeding problems
- brain infection or inflammation
- bacterial infections of the skin and soft tissues in children including Group A streptococcal infections
- blood stream infections (sepsis)
- toxic shock syndrome
- bone infections
- joint infections
- death

Get vaccinated if you are not protected against chickenpox. For more information about the disease or chickenpox vaccine, please call the Alachua County Health Department at 352-334-7981.

Reference: www.cdc.gov

Increase Norovirus Outbreaks in Florida

By: Isabel Anasco, RN

Epidemiology/Hepatitis Coordinator
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Health departments across Florida have reported norovirus outbreaks in recent weeks. Florida usually sees an increase in norovirus cases during the winter months, but we've seen a noticeable upswing in the past month. Here in Alachua County, we had 1 confirmed Norovirus outbreak and 1 probable case so far.

Norovirus is a highly contagious illness caused by infection with a virus called norovirus. It is often called by other names, such as viral gastroenteritis, stomach flu, and food poisoning. Norovirus infection causes acute gastroenteritis (inflammation of the stomach and intestines); the most common symptoms are diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach pain. Anyone can get norovirus, and they can have the illness multiple times during their lifetime.

Norovirus can make people feel extremely ill and vomit or have diarrhea many times a day. Most people get better within 1 to 2 days. Dehydration can be a problem among some people with norovirus infection, especially the very young, the elderly, and people with other illnesses.

Noroviruses are found in the stool and vomit of infected people. People can become infected by eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with norovirus, touching surfaces or objects that are contaminated with norovirus, and then placing their hand in their mouth, or having direct contact with an infected person; for example, by exposure to the virus when caring for or when sharing food, drinks, or eating utensils with an infected person.

Tips to prevent the spread of norovirus:

Practice proper hand hygiene: Wash your hands carefully with soap and water, especially after using the toilet and changing diapers and always before eating or preparing food. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers (containing at least 62% ethanol) may be a helpful addition to hand washing, but they are not a substitute for washing with soap and water.

Take care in the kitchen: Carefully wash fruits and vegetables, and cook oysters and other shellfish thoroughly before eating them.

Do not prepare food while infected: People who are infected with norovirus should not prepare food for others while they have symptoms and for 3 days after they recover from their illness.

Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces: After an episode of illness, such as vomiting or diarrhea, immediately clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces by using a bleach-based household cleaner as directed on the product label or a solution made by adding 5–25 tablespoons of household bleach to 1 gallon of water.

Wash laundry thoroughly: Immediately remove and wash clothing or linens that may be contaminated with vomit or fecal matter. Handle soiled items carefully—without agitating them—to avoid spreading virus. They should be laundered with detergent at the maximum available cycle length and then machine dried.

Reference: <http://www.cdc.gov>

FLORIDA REPORTABLE DISEASES *Alachua County 2 year activity*

Disease Activity	2012	2011	2011	Disease Activity	cont'd	2012	2011	2011
	Jan-Feb	Jan-Feb	Jan-Dec			Jan-Feb	Jan-Feb	Jan-Dec
AIDS	6	6	39	Listeriosis (02700)		0	0	0
Animal Bites to Humans (07101)	34	40	58	Lyme Disease (06959)		0	0	2
Anthrax	0	0	0	Lymphogranuloma Venereum		0	0	0
Botulism	0	0	0	Malaria (08460)		0	0	4
Brucellosis	0	0	0	Measles (05590)		0	0	3
Campylobacteriosis (03840)	3	3	21	Meningitis, Group B Strep (32040)		0	0	0
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning (98600)	0	5	5	Meningitis other (32090)		1	1	4
Chancroid	0	0	0	Meningitis Strep Pneumoniae (32020)		0	0	0
<i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i>	283	296	1718	Meningococcal (<i>Neisseria Meningitidis</i>)03630		0	0	0
<i>Cholera</i>	0	0	0	Mercury Poisoning		0	0	1
Ciguatera	0	0	0	Monkey Bite (07103)		0	0	0
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD)	0	0	0	Mumps		0	0	0
Cryptosporidiosis (13680)	3	3	15	Neurotoxic Shellfish Poisoning		0	0	0
Cyclosporiasis (00720)	0	0	3	Pertussis (03390)		1	1	7
Dengue (06100)	0	0	0	Pesticide-Related Illness or Injury		1	0	2
Diphtheria	0	0	0	Plague		0	0	0
Encephalitis	0	0	0	Psittacosis		0	0	0
Eastern Equine	0	0	0	Q fever		0	0	0
Non-arboviral	0	0	0	Rabies Animal (07102)		2	1	8
Other arboviral	0	0	0	Ricin Toxin		0	0	0
St. Louis	0	0	0	Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (08200)		0	0	1
West Nile	0	0	0	Rubella		0	0	0
Western Equine	0	0	0	SARS		0	0	0
<i>E.coli</i> 0157:H7 (41601)	0	0	0	Salmonellosis (00300)		3	5	73
<i>Ehrlichiosis/anaplasmosis,HGE, A.</i>	0	0	2	Saxitoxin poisoning psp		0	0	0
<i>Phagocytophilum (08381)</i>				Shigellosis (00490)		3	0	18
<i>Ehrlichiosis/anaplasmosis,hme e chaff. 08382</i>	0	0	3	Smallpox		0	0	0
<i>Escherichia Coli, Shiga Toxin Producing 00800</i>	0	0	6	<i>Staphylococcus aureus, VRSA</i>		0	0	0
<i>E.coli, Other (41603)</i>	0	0	0	<i>Staphylococcus enterotoxin B</i>		0	0	0
Giardiasis (acute) (00710)	4	2	25	Streptococcal Disease grp A inva (03400)		1	1	5
Gonorrhea	105	88	574	<i>Strep pneumoniae</i> invasive Disease, Drug resistant (04823)		3	2	6
H. Influenzae Pneumonia (48220)	0	0	0	<i>Strep pneumoniae</i> invasive Disease, susceptible (04830)		8	4	12
<i>Haemophilus influenzae, inv disease(03841)</i>	2	2	6	Syphilis		6	5	30
Hansen's Disease (Leprosy)	0	0	0	Syphilis in pregnant women & neonates		0	0	0
Hantavirus infection	0	0	0	Tetanus		0	0	0
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome 42000	0	0	0	Toxoplasmosis (acute)		0	1	1
Hepatitis A	1	0	2	Trichinosis		0	0	0
Hepatitis B (+HBsAG in preg women or child < 24 months (07039)	0	2	11	Tuberculosis		0	3	9
Hepatitis B Perinatal (07744)	0	0	0	Tularemia		0	0	0
Hepatitis B Acute (07030)	0	0	2	Typhoid Fever		0	0	0
Hepatitis B Chronic (07032)	10	10	81	Typhus Fever		0	0	0
Hepatitis C Acute (07051)	0	0	1	Vaccinia Disease		0	0	0
Hepatitis C Chronic (07054)	41	54	409	Varicella (05290)		15	3	12
Hepatitis E (07053)	0	1	1	<i>Vibrio Parahaemolyticus (00540)</i>		0	0	1
Herpes Simplex Virus in < 6mo of age	0	0	0	<i>V. cholerae</i> Serogroup 01/ non 01		0	0	0
HIV	14	11	68	Viral Hemorrhagic Fever		0	0	0
Human Papillomavirus (HPV) <12 yrs	0	0	0	Yellow Fever		0	0	0
Influenza A, Novel or Pandemic Strains	0	0	0					
Lead Poisoning (94890)	1	0	1					
Legionellosis (48280)	0	1	2					

Any disease outbreak (e.g., in the community, hospital, or other institution; or foodborne or waterborne) presence of a disease outbreak. All cases suspected and confirmed are included in this report. Any grouping or clustering of patients having similar diseases, symptoms or syndromes that may indicate the

Influenza Activity Update

Submitted By: Isabel Anasco RN

Alachua County Health Department

National

Influenza and ILI are at low levels nationwide according to Centers

of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report. Using Florida ILINet data, CDC calculated minimal ILI intensity for week 10 (March 4 – 10, 2012).

State

Influenza and ILI activity in Florida is low according to Florida Department of Health surveillance systems. Most reporting counties report low to no activity. No ILI or influenza outbreak was reported on week 11 (March 11 – 17, 2012). Low numbers of influenza specimens have tested positive for seasonal influenza A H3 by the state lab this flu season.

Alachua County

In Alachua County, the flu activity has been mild and remains steady. We continue to monitor the flu activity weekly. Our influenza surveillance system include ESSENCE, school absenteeism, sentinel providers, positive culture counts, Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality Report, weekly random calls to daycares, Jail, nursing homes, private offices, etc.

PREVENT THE FLU

The CDC recommends flu vaccinations for everyone 6 months of age and older. Getting vaccinated can decrease your risk of severe flu illnesses. The most susceptible people of serious flu complications include pregnant women, immune compromised, young children, and people 65 years and older.

Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your arm will prevent germs from spreading. Remember to wash your hands often with soapy water, and if soap isn't available use an alcohol-based sanitizer. If you do get sick, REMEMBER to stay home 24 hours after fever is gone and to avoid unnecessary contact with others.

References:

http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/epi/swineflu/Reports/reports.htm

www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivitysurv.htm

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