

The Pump Handle



"I had an interview with the Board of Guardians of St. James's parish, on the evening of Thursday, 7th September, and represented the above circumstances to them. In consequence of what I said, the handle of the pump was removed on the following day."

John Snow, 1855

February 2006 Topics

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Influenza Update

Influenza cases continue to be reported to the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH). It is difficult to determine if this is a mild flu season or if the peak will occur later in the season. Since 2000, the flu seasons have peaked at the following times:

| Influenza Season | Peak of Season By Week Ending: |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2004-2005 | Feb. 5, 2005 |
| 2003-2004 | Dec. 13, 2003 |
| 2002-2003 | Apr. 5, 2003 |
| 2001-2002 | Feb. 23, 2002 |
| 2000-2001 | Jan. 27, 2001 |

At this time, there have been no reported influenza-associated pediatric deaths. For weekly updates on the influenza season, go to www.ndflu.com/Data/InfluenzaSummary.aspx

For more information about influenza and the surveillance program, visit the NDDoH influenza website at www.ndflu.com.



North Dakota Hantavirus Case

A case of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome was reported to the NDDoH in January 2006. This is the eighth hantavirus case reported in North Dakota since the disease was identified in the United States in 1993.

The patient was hospitalized with symptoms of fever and acute respiratory distress syndrome, requiring supplemental oxygen. The patient was discharged from the hospital about one week later and has since recovered.

The case reported contact with mouse droppings while cleaning at work during the months of November and December 2005. No other employees were found ill. Local environmental health personnel investigated the work scene. Although rodent infestation was not apparent, management was consulted on proper disinfection and pest control. A certified pest control professional inspected the place of employment and placed proper trapping equipment to prevent possible further spread of the disease. No other risk factors were identified during the case investigation.

For more information about hantavirus, visit www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hanta/hps/index.htm.



FDA Approves New Rotavirus Vaccine

In February 2006, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced the approval of the new, live, oral rotavirus vaccine, RotaTeq™. Rotavirus is a viral infection that is the leading cause of diarrhea in infants and young children worldwide. RotaTeq™, manufactured by Merck & Co. Inc., is now the only vaccine approved in the United States to help protect against this infection.

Large-scale drug trials conducted on the RotaTeq™ vaccine found it was not associated with an increased risk of intussusception or any other serious adverse events. Intussusception is a rare blockage or twisting of the intestine that can be life-threatening. A previous live vaccine approved by the FDA in 1998 for use against rotavirus was later withdrawn due to an association of increased risk of intussusception.

The draft Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendation for RotaTeq™ states “for infants to receive three doses of the oral vaccine at two, four and six months of age. Children should receive the first dose of the vaccine by 12 weeks of age and should receive all doses of the vaccine by 32 weeks of age.” The NDDoH will send notification when the ACIP recommendations are published.

To learn more about the new rotavirus vaccine, visit www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/news/2006/NEW01307.html.



Meet the New Field Epidemiologist

Name: Annette Olson

Health Unit: Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health

Education Background: I graduated from St. Mary’s Central High School in 2001 and from Concordia College in Moorhead in May 2005 with a bachelor’s degree in biology. I also studied abroad at James Cook University in Cairns, Australia, for one semester.

Past Experience: I worked as a CNA at Eventide Lutheran Home in Moorhead, Minn., for two years. I also worked at Direct Service Professional for two years providing care for people with developmental disabilities.

Family/Hobbies: I like fishing, camping, hiking and running – pretty much any outdoor activity! I will be running my first marathon in Fargo in May. I grew up on a horse farm and have been riding my whole life. I train and show quarter horses and plan to rodeo this summer. I also really enjoy art. I studied studio art in college, mostly specializing in drawing and oil painting. I have illustrated one book so far and will hopefully do more in the future. (Maybe when I retire ... but I guess that's a ways off!!)

Contributing authors of The Pump Handle include Julie Goplin, Michelle Feist, Tracy Miller and Kirby Kruger. For questions, suggestions or inquiries, or to be removed from the mailing list, please contact Julie Goplin of the Division of Disease Control at 701.328.2375 or by email at jgoplin@state.nd.us.

The pump handle picture in the title was obtained from the website www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow.html.



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