

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

January 2011 Topics

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Acute Viral Gastroenteritis Activity Update

Since Oct. 1, 2010, 12 viral gastroenteritis outbreaks (with three confirmed as norovirus outbreaks) have been reported to the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) by institutions. Of these outbreaks, 10 occurred in long-term care facilities and one in a basic-care facility. Additionally, one confirmed norovirus outbreak occurred in a child-care center. A total of 12 viral gastroenteritis outbreaks, three confirmed norovirus, have occurred in Cass, Dickey, Foster, Grand Forks, McKenzie, Morton, Ransom, Stark, Stutsman, Ward and Wells counties.

Of these 12 reported viral gastroenteritis outbreaks, more than 160 residents and 100 staff became ill with symptoms of diarrhea and vomiting. Norovirus is the most common cause of viral gastroenteritis outbreaks and often is called the “winter vomiting disease” or “stomach flu.” Although it is commonly referred to as the stomach flu, it has no relationship to the influenza virus that causes respiratory infections.

Norovirus quickly can spread from person-to-person. Of the reported outbreaks, the duration ranged from two to 31 days. Immediate infection control measures are necessary to prevent the spread of infection. Practicing good hand hygiene, disinfecting contaminated surfaces and not returning to work or school until 24 to 72 hours after

symptoms resolve are recommended measures for the prevention and control of norovirus infections. Please visit www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5633a2.htm for more information about the prevention of norovirus.

To report an acute viral gastroenteritis outbreak, please contact the NDDoH at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378 or submit an online report form at www.ndhealth.gov/disease/GI/.



Influenza Update

As of Feb. 5, 2011, a total of 286 laboratory-identified influenza cases have been reported to the NDDoH from 32 counties. Of the 286 reported cases, 94 percent were identified as type A (n=269) and 6 percent as type B (n=17). Of the 269 influenza A cases, 29 have been sub-typed with eight identified as type A 2009 H1N1 and 21 as type A H3.

Influenza in North Dakota recently has started a rapid geographical spread across our state. This indicates that more and more communities are starting to report influenza activity. This should be a reminder to everyone who hasn't received an influenza vaccine this year to call his or her doctor, local public health unit or pharmacist to get vaccinated against the flu. It is never too late to get vaccinated and it is undoubtedly one of the best ways to prevent getting ill with influenza.

For more information about influenza, influenza vaccine, influenza activity or to order free educational materials, visit the NDDoH Influenza website at www.ndflu.com.



Updates to the Morbidity Report Card

The Division of Disease Control has made changes to the online morbidity report card. The online report card can be found at www.ndhealth.gov/disease/reportcard/. The following fields have been added:

1. Zip code
2. Ethnicity
3. Pregnancy status
4. Date discharged
5. Treatment information
 - Was the person treated?
 - Treatment date
 - Drug name
6. Name of lab test
7. Test result
8. Note asking to fax the antimicrobial susceptibility report to 701.328.0355 if susceptibility testing was completed.
9. The disease list also has been updated to reflect the changes made to the mandatory reportable conditions.

The complete mandatory reportable condition list can be found at www.ndhealth.gov/Disease/Rules. An overview of the rule changes can be found at www.ndhealth.gov/Disease/NewsLetters/PumpHandle/PumpHandleArchives10.htm in the December 2010 issue. The hard copy morbidity report card also is updated with the

mentioned changes. To order additional cards, call the Division of Disease Control at 701.328.2378 or 800.472.2180 (toll free).



Tuberculosis Found in Leg

Tuberculosis (TB) can exist in the human body in a dormant, latent state or in an active, disease state. Active TB often is thought of as a condition of the lungs that produces many symptoms related to the pulmonary system. However, Tuberculosis, can affect many different parts of the body besides the lungs. This type of disease is classified as extra-pulmonary tuberculosis. In 2009, there were five cases of active TB in North Dakota, three of which were extra-pulmonary.

Earlier this year, another case of extra-pulmonary TB was found. The patient was a young child who was diagnosed with extra-pulmonary TB in the tibia, a bone in the lower leg. To correctly diagnose tuberculosis, a sample of the infected tissue had to be submitted to labs for identification.

Tuberculosis disease can be present in many different parts of the human body. Whether in the lungs (pulmonary) or other places (extra-pulmonary), it must be identified and treated with anti-TB drugs. Disease that is not treated can cause serious problems and death.



New Disease Control Employee!

Please help us in welcoming Shawn McBride as a new employee to the Division of Disease Control!

Name: Shawn McBride

Title: Field Epidemiologist, Grand Forks

Education Background: BA in Psychology and a BS in Biology from the University of North Dakota (UND). I graduated from Custer County District High School in Miles City, Montana.

Past Experience: I worked previously at the Richard Stadter Center in Grand Forks as a Clinical Lead working with inpatient psychiatric patients ranging in ages from 5 to 85. Before that, while in school, I worked at Wonder Years Childcare as a teacher with school-age children and coached baseball in the summers. I also worked in hospice care for a summer.

Family/Hobbies: I am the oldest of nine kids. I played baseball at UND for three years. I play softball and basketball in the summer and snowboard in the winter. I enjoy video games, chess and drawing. I am an avid planted aquarium keeper and aquascaper. I am a writer for Aquascaping World Magazine.

Contributing authors of The Pump Handle include Sarah Weninger, Craig Steffens, Becky Wahl, Lindsey VanderBusch, Julie Wagendorf, Kirby Kruger and Tracy Miller. For questions, suggestions or inquiries, or to be removed from the mailing list, please contact Sarah Weninger of the Division of Disease Control at 701.328.2366 or by email at sweninger@nd.gov.

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



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