

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

March 2008 Topics

- Influenza Update
- Two *Salmonella* Typhi Cases Reported in North Dakota
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Influenza Update

Influenza activity in North Dakota reached its peak for the 2007-2008 season during the weeks ending Feb. 23, 2008 and March 1, 2008. Since then, flu activity has been decreasing; however, infection continues in some communities. As of March 29, 2008, a total of 3,291 influenza cases were reported to the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) so far this season. Influenza type A is the predominant type reported, with the majority of the cases in those age 19 and younger. The following table summarizes the 2007-2008 influenza cases by type and age group so far this season:

	TYPE		
	A	B	Unspecified A or B
<10	623	238	20
10-19	467	76	16
20-29	410	70	11
30-39	257	141	6
40-49	210	126	8
50-59	160	129	10
60 and older	182	120	11
TOTAL	2,309	900	82

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



Two *Salmonella* Typhi Cases Reported in North Dakota

During March and April, two cases of *Salmonella* Typhi were reported to the NDDoH. Both cases reside in Cass County, but no association has been made between the two cases. Both cases had recent travel history to countries endemic with *Salmonella* Typhi. Neither case works in sensitive occupations; i.e., day care, health care or food works. However, NDDoH is conducting follow up testing as a precautionary measure with both cases to determine if they are carriers.

Information about typhoid fever including symptoms and vaccine can be found at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/typhoidfever_g.htm.



Hantavirus Awareness and Prevention

Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) is a severe respiratory disease spread by contact to urine, feces or saliva of certain rodents. As spring approaches, many North Dakotans are venturing outside to being spring cleaning in outbuildings that were closed up for the winter, such as lake cabins, barns and grain bins. If not done carefully, cleaning activities in areas near rodent infestation can promote risk of exposure to hantavirus.

Symptoms of HPS usually occur two to three weeks after exposure. Early symptoms commonly include fever, muscle and body aches, fatigue, headache, dizziness, chills, nausea and vomiting. The illness worsens within a short period of time to include cough and severe shortness of breath when lungs fill with fluid. Nine cases of HPS, have been reported in North Dakota since 1993, of which five were fatal. No cases have been reported since 2006.

Most cases reported in North Dakota have documented rodent exposure and live in rural areas. HPS is prevented by taking precautions against rodent infestation and ensuring proper disinfection:

- Fill any holes in your home or cabin that are large enough to place your finger.
- Clean droppings or urine with 1½ cups chlorine bleach to one gallon water.
- Wear rubber gloves while cleaning.
- Do not vacuum or sweep to avoid making virus-containing particles airborne.
- For heavy rodent infestation, contact your state or local public health department.

For more information about hantavirus and cleaning rodent-infested buildings, visit www.ndhealth.gov/Disease/Documents/faqs/Hantavirus.pdf or www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hanta/hps/index.htm or call the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2180.



April Is STD Awareness Month

April is National Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) Awareness Month, an observance created to increase awareness about STDs, including their transmission, prevention and treatment. STDs continue to be a major health threat in the United States, especially among adolescents and young adults. Recently, one study found that one in four (26 percent) young women between the ages of 14 and 19 in the United States, or 3.2 million teenage girls, are infected with at least one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases (STDs): human

papillomavirus (HPV), chlamydia, herpes or trichomoniasis. The two most common STDs were HPV (18 percent) and chlamydia (4 percent). If undetected and left untreated, STDs can lead to potentially severe health consequences, including ectopic pregnancy or infertility in females. The findings of this study underscore the importance of annual chlamydia screening and vaccination for HPV as part of a comprehensive approach to sexual health in young women.

In North Dakota, preliminary data indicate 1,801 cases of chlamydia and 119 cases of gonorrhea were reported to the NDDoH in 2007. Of these totals, 73 percent of chlamydia cases and 64 percent of gonorrhea cases occurred among people ages 15 to 24.

A recent change in health department-assisted partner notification for chlamydial infections in North Dakota became effective Jan. 1, 2008. Resource limitations within the Department of Health no longer allow for the health department-assisted approach of conducting interviews of uncomplicated* chlamydia infections or partner notification by field epidemiologists. Therefore, it is especially important that health-care providers take the initiative to assist with partner notification of positive chlamydia infections and counsel the patient to refer his/her recent partners (within the last three months) for clinical evaluation.

Additional information about STDs is available at www.cdcnpin.com/stdawareness. North Dakota STD statistics can be found at www.ndhealth.gov/STD/Data/STDData.htm

*Uncomplicated chlamydial infections are defined as infections occurring in individuals who (1) are ≥ 14 years of age, (2) are not pregnant, **and** (3) have no complications such as pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy, etc.

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



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